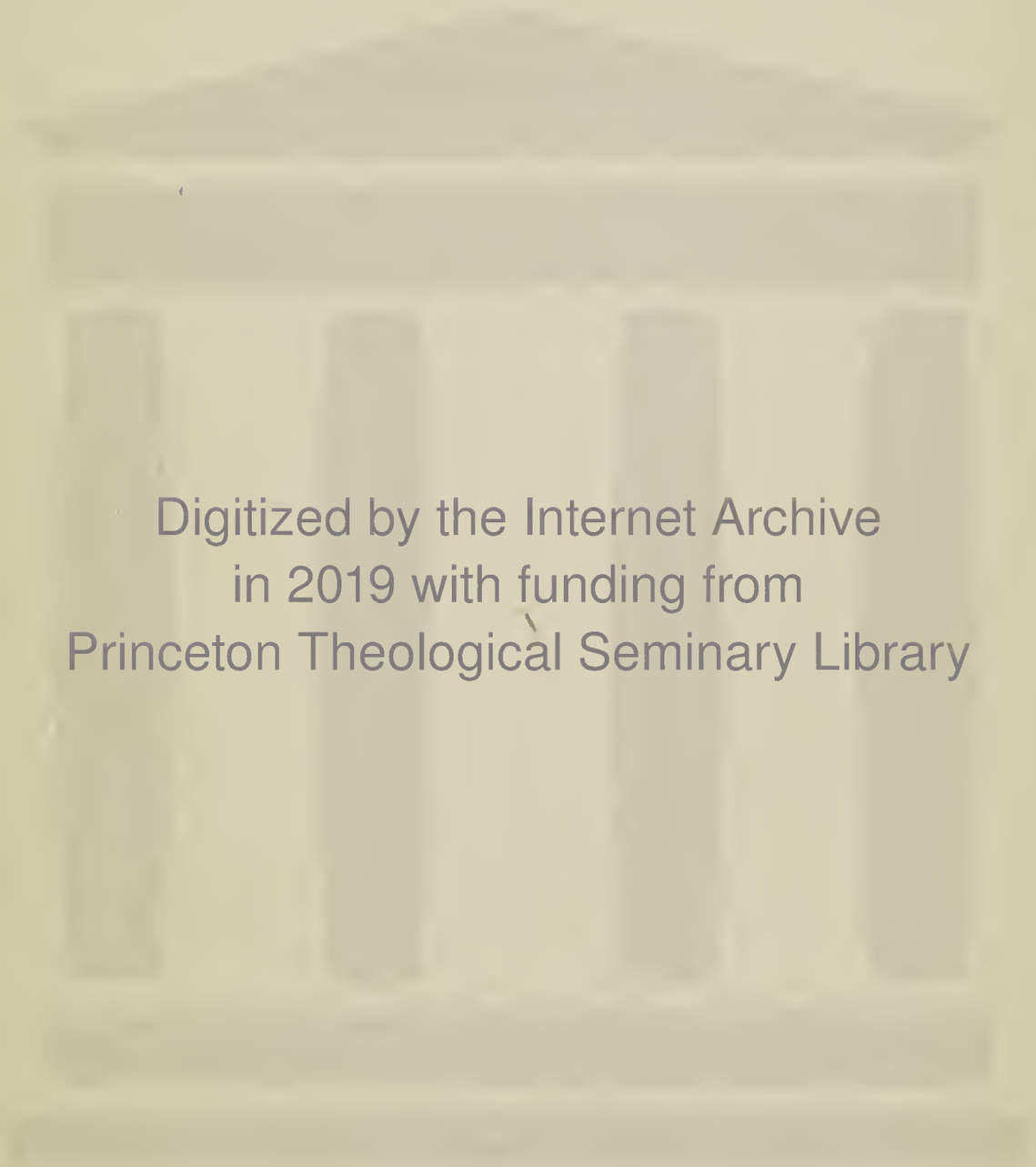
A CHRISTIAN PROGRAM FOR THE RURAL COMMUNITY

KENYON L. BUTTERFIELD



THE FONDREN LECTURES FOR 1923

Delivered Before the SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY
of SOUTHERN METHODIST UNIVERSITY

A CHRISTIAN PROGRAM FOR THE RURAL COMMUNITY

BY

KENYON L. BUTTERFIELD
A.M., LL.D.

The Fondren Lectures

Mr. and Mrs. W. W. Fondren, members of St. Paul's Methodist Episcopal Church, South, Houston, Texas, gave to Southern Methodist University on May 10, 1910, a fund, the proceeds from which were to be used in the establishment of the Fondren Lectures on Christian Missions. The following paragraph from the conditions of the original gift will set forth the spirit and purpose of the Foundation:

"The interest on the investment shall be used annually in procuring some competent person to deliver lectures on Christian Missions under the auspices of Southern Methodist University. This fund is dedicated to the foundation of a lectureship on Christian Missions in consideration of other donations made for the upbuilding of Southern Methodist University, and especially the School of Theology thereof, and in the hope that something of good may come directly therefrom and that others more able to give largely may be inspired to devote some portion of the means which they hold in trust as stewards of the Lord to the increase of said fund or to some other laudable enterprise of our Church."

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FOR THE
RURAL COMMUNITY

BY
KENYON L. BUTTERFIELD
A.M., LL.D.
PRESIDENT, MASSACHUSETTS AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE

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Chapter One

THE NEED OF A CHRISTIAN PROGRAM

Chapter One

THE NEED OF A CHRISTIAN PROGRAM

Are We Half Pagan?

The American people in the past have habitually assumed that they were a Christian nation. We have sent missionaries to convert the heathen. We have even suspected that some European nations were only in part Christian, and when the great war broke out we were sure of it. But we are now in a chastened mood; there are those among us who even assert that our civilization is half pagan. Returned missionaries tell us that Oriental countries are becoming doubtful if we are a Christian country, and are asking in what respects, even if we are Christian, we have the advantage over them. Not long ago a group of Christian business men from Tokyo came to the United States for the purpose of discovering how the practices of Christian merchants differ from the practices of non-Chris-

tian merchants. A press report states that they have not yet found the difference!

For a quarter of a century books have been appearing in increasing numbers concerning the need of applying Christian principles to our social problems, and recently these books have multiplied many fold. The very foundations of our social structure are being challenged. Walter Rauschenbusch a decade ago said, "It is unjust to Christianity to call our civilization Christian; it is unjust to our civilization to call it unchristian. It is semi-Christian." Professor Ellwood in his book on "The Reconstruction of Religion" has a chapter on "Our Semi-pagan Civilization," in which he says that one of the important needs of the time is "the perception of the essential paganism and barbarity of our present civilization." And again: "The trend in Western civilization as a whole for several years immediately prior to the breaking out of the great war was unquestionably away from Christian ideals." And then this challenge: "Now this recrudescence of barbarism shows conclusively enough that our civilization can no longer remain half pagan and half Christian. It must soon become one or

the other. We have come to the parting of the ways. Unless the world becomes speedily Christian, it is bound to become speedily pagan."

These are ominous words. But they are no stronger than those used by one of the able editors of the time, Mr. Glenn Frank of the *Century Magazine,* who, partly in comment on Mr. Ellwood's book, said:

The civilization that preceded and precipitated the war was at best a thinly veneered barbarism that was slowly consuming the life of the race in the poverties of peace no less than in the perils of war. Pagan ideals of power and pleasure had spread their nets anew for the capture of our souls. Power was the goal of the state; pleasure was the goal of the people. Political life had become paganized by its passion for power at any price; business life had become paganized by its scramble for profits at any price; and social life had become paganized by its devotion to pleasure at any price. In this reluctant indictment little, if any, discrimination can be made between allied, enemy, and neutral peoples. We were all guilty of the sin of surrender to pagan ideals. We practiced paganism while we professed Christianity. All of Western civilization was thus a sort of corporate hypocrisy.

And Dr. Daniel Evans of Andover Theological Seminary has recently stated the issue in these weighty words: "It is quite plain to all that paganism is once more in power in the lives of many persons in all lands. The deadliest conflict our religion now faces is with this fiercest foe of all it holds dear. The essential principles of both are opposed."

The same sort of indictment of Western civilization is abroad in England. A writer in the *Manchester Guardian,* under the title "The Threat to Civilization" says, "We are forced to recognize a deep-seated disharmony in our civilization, something wrong with the nations which comes out in their dealings with one another"; and then, referring to a statement of Mr. H. G. Wells to the effect that modern civilized society has visibly broken down, says, "This moral breakup is the cause of the desolation which Mr. Wells sees advancing." And Bishop William Temple quotes, from a report of the Archbishop's Committee on Christianity and Industrial Problems, to the effect that our present "industrial society" is fundamentally and gravely defective and that "the solution of the industrial problem involves,

in short, not merely the improvement of individuals but a fundamental change in the spirit of industrial civilization itself." Professor Tawney, the English economist, says in no uncertain terms that we cannot get ahead so long as acquisition is the main motive of the human race, and that the only remedy is to turn "an acquisitive society" into a society motivated by the spirit of service to humanity.

These men are not "Socialists" nor "Reds," nor "Bolshevists"; but all of them are sober-minded, responsible for what they say, and some of them are influential leaders of the Church. It is clear, however, that they are prophets of a new social order; and they agree substantially that we have only half succeeded in making our civilization Christian; or to reverse the thought, that we are still half pagan.

The Demand for a Christian Program for Society

When we seek an answer to the question, "What are we going to do about it?" "How can we get rid of this half-pagan civilization?" what is perhaps the expected answer, but after all the very significant answer, is that we must make it wholly Christian. And even more

striking is the fact that by no means all of the emphasis upon religion as the cure for our present ills comes from the leaders of the Church. Practically all of the constructive suggestions for meeting our present difficulties emphasize the idea that we must change the spirit and attitude of great masses of men, and when definitions are attempted, the terms of reform are always items in a Christian program. I think we may fairly say that we are seeing a gathering tide of powerful influences asserting that we must have a Christian program for society, that it is the only way out of our troubles, and that our task is to define the program clearly, illustrate satisfactorily its applications, and then proceed to carry it out.

Mr. Frank, in the article already quoted, after referring to Professor Santayana's doleful prophecy that civilization is perhaps entering one of those long winters that overtake it from time to time, says that "nothing can prevent Western civilization from entering the long winter of Mr. Santayana's prophecy except a vast spiritual renaissance, a vast process of moral renewal sweeping through the world

like another Reformation. Only it must be a more fundamental reformation. Personally, I believe that we are in the morning hours of such a renaissance."

An editorial in the New York *Times* last July said, under the title "Indestructible Religion": "Nothing is so much needed to-day in the rehabilitation of the broken world as a faith that still holds toward a higher, diviner goal than mere social and economic and political adjustment—than things that are purely physical and temporal."

A report of a conference of employers, chiefly members of the Society of Friends, held in England three or four years ago, outlined a very complete and striking program on "The Way in Which Our Religious Faith Can Be Given Fuller Expression in Business Life." There is no doubt but in America there are hundreds of high-minded business men fairly and earnestly, individually and in groups, striving to work out on some practical, effective basis this same thought of reconciling religion and business, of making industries and society truly Christian. Although of course disclaiming the Christian label, there has recently been

issued an "Ethical Program for Business Men," indorsed by the Business Men's Club of the New York Society for Ethical Culture. This report says: "We affirm that the evils which are inherent in the present economic system, and which are more and more eclipsing its incidental advantages, are all traceable to a false motive as their ultimate root." And the false motive is that of rendering social service for "the sake of the pecuniary gain to be derived from it"; whereas "the motive must be service for the sake of service." The report speaks of "prostitution of service to money gain" as "the blight on the business world to-day."

In the debate last December in the United States Senate on the proposal of Senator Borah for an international conference, Senator Williams of Mississippi made a speech which was nothing more or less than a sermon on the need of applying Christianity to international affairs, and in his speech is found this striking paragraph:

Do you know what real progressivism means? It means taking steps forward toward the concept of God and trying to idealize our

ordinary relations toward a common goal, which is His will, and His will is for peace on earth amongst men. That is what real progressivism means; but I doubt not that to a lot of you it looks like conservatism and reaction of the most ultimate character—going back to God, which is rather, I imagine, a reactionary movement.

It is both encouraging and significant to discover the extent to which church bodies and various other groups of Christians are endeavoring to work out practicable Christian programs for the rehabilitation of industry, business, and international affairs. Let me in a very brief way call attention to a number of these expressions.

The "Social Creed of the Churches," first adopted in 1912, ratified in 1916, added to in 1919, has been promulgated by the Federal Council of Churches and indorsed by many other bodies. It is a specific program of some twenty points, and is an avowed effort to apply Christian principles to the acquisition and use of property and the equitable division of the product of industry.

Equally strong ground has been taken by the American Catholic church through what

is known as "The Bishops' Program." In fact this program is distinctly a charter of freedom for the workingman. "What it aims to do is to bring more justice and charity into industrial life, and help to build economic institutions that will take more into consideration the sacred rights and the no less sacred duties of human beings."

There has been organized a "Fellowship for a Christian Social Order" whose main purpose is stated in the following remarkable preamble:

We believe that, according to the life and teaching of Jesus, the supreme task of mankind is the creation of a social order, the Kingdom of God on earth, wherein the maximum opportunity shall be afforded for the development and enrichment of every human personality; in which the supreme motive shall be love; wherein men shall coöperate in service for the common good and brotherhood shall be a reality in all of the daily relationships of life.

Plans are under way for a "National Conference on the Christian Way of Life in Industrial, Racial, and International Relations." The purpose is to make a serious study of

these problems "in the light of the spirit and teaching of Jesus."

In 1921 there was held in England the first "Universal Christian Conference of the Church of Christ on Life and Work"; a second meeting was held in Sweden in 1922; and it is proposed to have a conference in America in the near future. The purpose is "to concentrate the thought of Christendom on the mind of Christ as revealed in the Gospels toward those great social questions, industrial and international, which are so acutely urgent in every country."

An exceedingly strong report, indeed I think one of the most significant volumes of our time, was prepared by the Committee on the War and Religious Outlook and published under the title "The Church and Industrial Reconstruction." There is a thorough analysis of the problem in terms of such topics as "The Christian Ideal for Society," "Unchristian Aspects of the Present Industrial Order," "The Christian Attitude Toward the System As a Whole," "The Christian Method of Social Betterment," "Present Practicable Steps Toward a More Christian Industrial Order," "The

Question of the Longer Future," "What Individual Christians Can Do to Christianize the Industrial Order," and "What the Church Can Do to Christianize the Industrial Order."

Perhaps no Church has taken stronger ground in this attempt to reshape American work and life on Christian principles than the Methodist Church, North. Through its Federation for Social Service, its social service bulletin, its coöperation with the Federal Council of Churches, and finally in its "address of the Board of Bishops," it has taken an advanced stand. The latter document recently issued says: "It is our solemn judgment that nothing short of the actual application of the principles of Jesus in governmental, economic, religious, educational, and racial life to-day will meet the need. The whole world stands appalled at the colossal failure of other programs. Let us now frankly and honestly practice the principles of Christ." And Bishop Francis J. McConnell added to this report these bold and pregnant words: "We are convinced that there is no healing for the world's woe unless we are willing to face concrete social faults as they are, and to approach the cure

of those faults not in a spirit of condescension but of humility and contrition for our share in them."

Perhaps it was not necessary in this instance to give so much time and space to these quotations, but I think they comprise a formidable array of cumulative evidence of a determined, organized, and sincere effort to provide a Christian program for the world. They are an attempt to meet the criticism of our present society which was voiced by a Christian preacher in the far East who has said that our failure to make society Christian is threefold, "that we have not thought out the application of our faith, and what we have seen we have not dared to follow, and what we have not dared to apply we still profess to have accepted."

So on every hand, as the present puzzling problems of to-day are under discussion, men are saying that religion is the only cure, whether it be the matter of respect for law, the proper relation between employer and employee, the care of the weaker folk in society, political reform, the breaking down of racial prejudice, the development of the international

spirit—the one adequate cure for our social ills, it is coming to be universally regarded, will be found in the motives, the spirit, the attitude, the teaching of Jesus of Nazareth.

Agriculture Omitted from the Programs

It is a curious fact, however, that in all this welter of discussion, among these many books, in the lines of these multitudes of periodical writings, in all the platform speeches, in the programs for reform, there is little or no reference to the problems of the rural people. Is it because there are no problems? Or is it because our rural civilization is more Christian than our urban civilization? Or is it taken for granted that what applies to our urban society also applies to our agricultural society? Or is it because these new prophets do not know the rural question? Surely it cannot be because of lack of rural people. One-third of the workers of the United States are farmers and one-half of our people live under essentially rural conditions. Even great industrial countries, like Germany and Belgium and England, have substantial portions of their population

living on the land. France is half rural, Italy is three-fourths rural, the Balkans are almost completely rural. When we pass to the huge populations of Russia and India and China, we find that four persons out of five live on the land and make their living directly from the land. It is safe to say that two-thirds and probably three-fourths of the world's population are engaged in agricultural or at least rural occupations, are living under non-urban conditions, and have the rural point of view. There are not less than one billion rural folk in the world.

Whatever the reasons may be, the fact that these Christian programs entirely omit the farmer is notable and serious; notable because of the significance of the farming population, serious because of the partial nature of any program that leaves them out of account. The periodicals essentially agricultural or those that are widely read by farmers do not for the most part avow a *Christian* point of view. Important committees or conferences on industrial relations, on international coöperation, on social reform, usually have small or no repre-

sentation of farmers. Great apostles of the newer gospel, such as Maude Royden, are not heard by the country people.

This unfortunate omission of rural interests is well illustrated in the case of peace propaganda. No population group is more peace-loving than the farmers; none suffers more from the ravages of war; none could be more easily mobilized for deeds of justice between nations, for none has a keener sense of justice. There is, however, no effort, so far as I can discover, either to reach the farming classes of the world with the messages of peace, nor to seek their support for the methods that may bring peace.

Significance of the Rural Group

Allusion has already been made to the fact that the major part of the world's population is made up of tillers of the soil. It is these men and women that must furnish the world's food supply. They meet the primary wants of man. There can be no city, no industry, no civilization, except as their hands and their skill and their sweat wring food from Mother Earth. There is no substitute thus far that

science, or invention, or business organization, or legislation has found for this elemental, vital contribution of the farmers to society.

The world of men has always been attracted by the glitter of gold, and even to-day we relish revelations of new material wealth that can be put to the use of man—gold and silver and precious stones and iron and coal and oil. But each of them and all of them thrown together are worth but a fraction of the value of the greatest natural resource of all, the soil. And the maintenance of the fertility of the soil is in the hands of the farmer. We may legislate to conserve water power; we may attempt to control the output of oil, but the only way by which society can guarantee food to future generations is to guarantee that the millions and hundreds of millions of farmers shall have the skill and purpose to conserve soil fertility.

Farming, moreover, is still the largest single industry in the world. Indeed, it is still the largest single industry in the United States, if we consider only those values that are added to products directly by the industry itself. The agricultural industry does not have the spectacular features of the huge manufacturing

plants. We have in agriculture no body of 75,000 employees under the control of one man. Nevertheless, on their scattered farms, in their quiet way, as they meet the spring sowing and the autumn harvest, the farmers of the world are the managers and the laborers in the largest industry of mankind. And their contribution is not merely to the food supply. They furnish also the larger fraction of raw materials for the various forms of manufacturing; the transportation of products to and from the farm is one of the great items in the service of all types of communication; a large share of the freight carried across the seas is directly or indirectly the product of the farmers.

Perhaps, man for man, the farmers are not as heavy buyers as are wage earners—they are more nearly self-sustaining. Nevertheless because of their huge numbers and by reason of rapidly increasing demands for machinery and other implements used in their business, as well as to supply the household needs which are common to them as to others, the farmers of the world constitute an immense consuming class, and their consumption power reacts im-

mediately upon manufacturing, transportation, commerce, finance. It has been said that if you could make it possible for each Chinese farmer to buy one more cotton suit a year than he now uses you would revolutionize the business of cotton goods manufacture.

The great fundamental quest of the twentieth century is the attempt to secure more democracy. Without entering upon any discussion of this profound term, we may safely assert that as democracy develops, masses of men exercise more and more influence. For generations to come, therefore, the farmers of the various countries and the farmers of the world as a whole are sure to play an increasingly important part in determining industrial, political, social, and international policies. I should like to discuss this matter more at length if time permitted because I regard this argument as one of the most important of all in making sure that our rural civilization is adequate to meet the demands of the age.

Without putting one's self under the charge of being sentimental and of idealizing the farmers, I think it may also be safely said that on the whole the morals and ideals of rural

people form a real contribution to the world's good. I believe sincerely that there are qualities of mind and heart engendered by the rural mode of life that do to some extent prevail in national life but that should, to a far greater degree, be made effective in the common moral issues of mankind.

And so for all these reasons we may not with safety omit the rural people and rural interests in the making of a Christian program for our world.

The "Rising Tide" of Agrarianism

Quite apart from these general considerations that may be argued as reasons for including farmers in the task of making the world Christian, is the fact that we are witnessing what is undoubtedly the most formidable agrarian movement in all history. In the *Atlantic Monthly* for November, 1922, Mr. Louis Levine in a significant article on "Communists and Ploughshares," states that "the reconstruction of Russia depends basically upon the reconstruction of her agricultural industry and of the economic and social relationships in which this industry is to be carried

on." Prince Lvov, the long-time President of the Russian Zemstvos, which have been called "The Farm Bureaus of Russia," recently said in an article in *Our World,* "The people of the soil were always the creative force and defense of the empire." And Dr. Guest in "The Struggle for Power in Europe" says, "All over Europe . . . future politics depend upon an agreement (or a fight in lieu of an agreement) between town and country." And Mr. H. L. Brailsford, the English publicist, has repeatedly, since the close of the war, called attention to the almost certain dominance of the peasants in the affairs of nearly all the European countries during the next few years. Hilaire Belloc believes that the quarrel between the proletariat and the capitalist is, in Europe at least, a most serious menace, and he says that "if our civilization were mainly industrial," then this peril might be vital. He says, however, that "happily for us the most of our European civilization is a peasant civilization, and one of the most remarkable of the changes of the quite recent times is the resurrection of the peasant in Europe, that is, the men working on the land and having their full proprietor-

ship in the land." And Signor Mussolini, the new leader of Italy, said not long ago in an interview that his government would "devote all its efforts to the creation of an agrarian democracy based on the principle of small ownership."

But we do not have to go to Europe to discover a full-blown agrarian movement. Our neighbors in Canada have witnessed not only in provincial elections, but in their federal elections, a distinct effort on the part of the farmers to gain power in politics. Up to this time the farmers have in a large measure succeeded. In our own country the rise and continuance of the Nonpartisan League, the agricultural bloc in Congress, and above all the remarkable development of the American Farm Bureau Federation, at present the most powerful farmers' organization which we have had in the United States in recent times, if not in all our history—these, I say, are distinct, definite, significant aspects of a genuine farmers' movement in North America.

As a matter of fact the world is witnessing the most widespread, the most determined, and the most powerful agrarian uprising in all his-

tory. And this fact, quite in itself, demands that we shall attempt to make this movement thoroughly Christian. To-day it probably has in it as much Christianity as has any other economic movement, and probably no more. It is a phenomenon, however, not to be ignored or neglected, particularly by those who believe that the Christianizing of the social order is the most imperative demand of our day.

The Inevitable Segregation of Farmers

We are frequently warned against trying to build a wall of separation between the urban groups and the rural groups. We are reminded that human nature is much the same whether in city or in country. We are urged to deprecate the growth of class consciousness on the part of the farmers. But after all, is there any escape from an inevitable segregation of rural folk? As a matter of fact they do live apart from the urban populations. Even if they live in villages, these are rural villages; there is no mistaking them. The rural environment is not the city environment. There is a "rural mind." True, the instincts of rural people are the same as those of other

people, but these instincts come to expression through different channels, simply because the spiritual topography, so to speak, differs from that of the city. But even if we cannot sustain theoretically, as I think we can, this idea of the necessary apartness of the rural people, in the realm of practical service there can be no doubt. The moment the city-trained teacher is transplanted to the country school, she discovers a difference. When the city-trained pastor takes a country church, he realizes that he is in a new atmosphere. When the city-trained social worker attempts rural projects he finds a new class of "cases." Rural folk must be "handled" differently. When they are talked to they must be addressed differently. To advocate attention to rural affairs as such is not to encourage separateness. It is merely efficient specialization. There are, for example, nine hundred social agencies in Massachusetts practically all urban. In general, the rural school has been neglected in our education reform, the rural church in our religious advancement, the agricultural industry in our discussion of industrial reform.

Doubtless the rural part of our civilization

must be fully knit with urban civilization. We cannot afford to have a distinctive class of tillers of the soil who have less intelligence, less economic efficiency, less political skill, a less satisfying mode of life. Unfortunately through most of our world's history and in most countries the farmers have been inferior. The most notable exception are the American farmers, who are quite the equal and probably on the whole the superior of similar economic groups in the city; though there are, of course, in every country superior farmers, men of the very highest type. But whatever the actual situation, as we look into the future we want to be sure that there is not an essential wall of separation between city and country.

But we cannot escape the fact that there will be physical segregation of the farmers, and we must do all that we can to see to it that this physical segregation does not result in spiritual or social isolation.

It is only fair to say, in calling attention to the failure of present Christian programs to take the farmer into account, that this fact of segregation is one explanation. Furthermore, the agricultural industry is not based

on the same terms as urban industry. There is practically no wage system. The troubles between employer and employee do not arise in the same manner, and indeed they scarcely come to the surface at all. And so we have to consider this fact of rural segregation in dealing with any phase of social reform. The farm people are essentially like other folk and very likely the same principles of human advancement apply to them as to people of the city; but the conditions under which they work are different and their program will have to be a different program.

Shall the Rural Two-thirds of the World be Christian?

If we desire a Christian world, we must make the rural part at least as Christian as the urban part, for it cannot be ignored. It won't drift into better things. It must be steered into them.

It is not necessary to argue a Christian program for the rural community mainly because of the urban program. All the facts that bear upon the importance of the farmers to society are in themselves arguments for a Christian

program. Whatever is vital for humanity is vital for the farmers. And so the subject of these lectures would seem to be thoroughly timely.

LIMITATIONS TO THIS DISCUSSION

I would that I had gifts adequate to the treatment of the subject, though it is impossible for any one person to compass the problem. The Christian rural program will have to be evolved as the result of the discussion and suggestions of many minds, particularly of the minds of the farmers themselves. But it is important that a beginning shall be made, that there shall be an attempt to state the problem, even if inadequately, and to call attention to the fact that the rural aspect of civilization needs attention.

The discussion too must be so brief as to be little more than an outline or a series of hints. It cannot possibly be comprehensive.

As a matter of fact, I doubt if I shall develop a program. I believe in programs; they clarify thought, compel constructive attitudes, stimulate the imagination. But a program may be as arid as the unwatered mesa. Back of

the program, in front of it, and permeating it, must be some conscious, all-embracing purpose, some definite goals, some dynamic vitalizing spirit. Irrigation ditches are programs, wholly indispensable. But the fountains of living waters must be led out through these artificial channels until every foot of land receives its beneficent portion. And I hope to talk more about the water than about the ditches. I hope to indicate the *background* of a program, or, to change the figure, to describe the soil most favorable for the planting of a program. We want a Christian rural world. What is a Christian rural world? And how can we get it?

Let me say also very frankly that these lectures are not primarily a discussion of the Church and its work, except of course as I regard the Church as completely essential to the making of the best sort of Christian program and to the carrying of it out. We must not think first of all of the fate of any social institution. We must consider rather the fundamentals of the task. For the time being we must look at the need of humanity rather than the glory of the Church. What we shall

come to, of course, is to urge that the glory of the Church will be found in the effectiveness of its service to humanity.

May I say just a personal word. These lectures are written not from the standpoint of the theologian or of the preacher. There is no attempt to use conventional religious language. They are rather the expression of convictions on the part of a layman who for nearly a generation has been interested, more than in any other one thing, in those issues that have to do with the development of the highest possible type of people in the land, in America and in all the world. He believes that the Christian way of life is the only path to this end, that human problems, both personal and collective, are to be solved only by applying the spirit and teachings of Jesus; that the time is at hand for what might be called a new gospel or at the least a new interpretation of the old gospel; that we must as never before deliberately seek to make all life, all institutions, all group effort, essentially Christian in purpose and method; and that in this revitalized campaign for human advancement the farmers have a place of commanding importance.

Chapter Two

THE PRINCIPLES INVOLVED

Chapter Two

THE PRINCIPLES INVOLVED

WHAT MAKES ANYTHING CHRISTIAN?

The Fight for Personal Freedom

For a thousand years, the Western world has been engaged in a constant, severe, and even bloody struggle to secure the rights of the multitude. We have fought for political liberty in order that each man might participate in the common government of all, rather than to permit a single man or even a small group of men to dictate the terms by which we must work and live. We have sought intellectual liberty in order to permit each one to do his own thinking, rather than to be bound by the traditions of the elders. We have demanded religious liberty in order that each one might be conscious of the means of personal access to his Maker. We are now engaged in a struggle for industrial liberty in order that the worker may more fully partici-

pate both in the conditions and in the rewards of his labor.

Indeed, as we look about us to-day, the fight for the gaining and maintaining of personal rights is as vigorous as ever, and the battle is far better organized than it has ever been before. Our class antagonisms are largely insistence upon rights. The rights of minorities are being asserted as well as the rights of majorities; for there are dangers and injustices in a government of an entire people by the proletariat, just as in a government by autocracy or oligarchy. The rights of small nations against large nations are being stoutly defended.

All this is legitimate struggle—legitimate because it is necessary. Apparently men are in general so constituted that if they have the power they are inclined to "lord" it over the rest of mankind without regard for the rights of others. So long as this remains true, the struggle for rights will go on. For men must be free; the dignity of the individual must be recognized; the value of personality must be conceded. We may not hope for peace, whether in the industrial field, in the realms

of political life, in the intellectual sphere, or in the areas of religion until man is free.

The Essence of Paganism

This struggle for rights reveals the character of our civilization. If our civilization were thoroughly Christian, all these rights would be conceded. The struggle of the multitude for freedom is in itself a demonstration of the correctness of the views of those who say we are semi-pagan. For what is paganism? Professor Ellwood concludes that the two dominating features of a pagan civilization are first, love of power, and second, love of pleasure. He traces these instincts as they came to expression in Greece and Rome, and says frankly that not only have both of these elements persisted through the centuries, but that they occupy a prominent place in our twentieth century civilization here in America. Business, industry, politics, seem to be mainly a struggle for power. Men seek to make profits for the power that money gives, rather than for a miser's delight in money itself. And indeed more than we are willing to admit we honor the money-maker. Why? Because he exem-

plifies to our imagination modern efficiency. A few years ago when the French philosopher, Bergson, returned to France from his first visit to America, he said in a public address that Americans were not to be condemned for their bending the knee to the rich man, because in a country where nature had not yet been subdued the making and possession of wealth was the most obvious test of man's efficiency in the necessary work of the age.

What is true of the individual is true of groups. A fundamental axiom in democracy, the will of the majority, is often translated as simply the will to power. Minority rights are frequently disregarded in a democracy, just as majority rights are often disregarded in an autocracy. Bolshevism is as undemocratic and as unchristian as autocracy or oligarchy.

A significant and a disturbing fact must, however, be recognized, that insistence upon rights often eventuates simply in a drive for power. What had been a struggle for rights in the beginning, so justifiable where rights are denied, almost unconsciously as rights are gained becomes a struggle for privilege, for a preferred position. One of the difficulties in

the labor world is that while for a century labor has sought through close organization to gain simple human rights, too often the power thus gained through organization is now used to maintain a comfortable place of power without the slightest regard for the rights of others.

The other element in paganism, pleasure, has always been the concomitant of power. And again, just as in the struggle for rights, the distribution or democratization of pleasure has a wholesome rootage. There is no better illustration than in the case of the automobile. At one time it appeared as though the automobile would be the symbol of comfort for the wealthy only. Thanks largely to Henry Ford, the automobile has become democratized. Perhaps it is stretching a point to speak of "the Ford" as a symbol of comfort! But at any rate it has given a new and widespread source of pleasure to countless multitudes. One of the triumphs of our American civilization is that a standard of living, formerly denied to the masses, is now reasonably well spread out, as is evidenced by the electric light, the comfortably heated house, the modern bathroom,

and the almost universal use of meat. But here again the opportunity to gain comfort leads, even among the multitude, to an overemphasis upon comfort. I speak of comfort as one phase of pleasure, the other being excitement. A recent novelist has spoken of Americans as "excitement eaters." The motion picture craze is a good illustration of our inability to get on without something external to attract the eye and to stir the emotions. We must make sharp distinction between pleasure in the sense of legitimate and necessary relaxation and recreation, and pleasure in the sense of self-indulgence. Too big a dose of pleasure is just as bad for human kind as overeating. One does not need to be "a Puritan" or a joy-killer to assert that selfish pleasure is a menace with which we must reckon as individuals and as a nation. A curious illustration of this emphasis upon comfort is tied up with American education. Thousands of hard-working parents sacrifice beyond belief for the purpose of giving their children an education "so they won't have to work"! The aim of a good American education should be to make a more efficient worker, a worker more useful to society, a

happier worker. Neither a high school nor a college diploma should ever be a ticket into the palace of pleasure and ease, but rather a commission to toil for the good of mankind. It is a pathetic reversal of all of the fundamental ideas of a Christian civilization to regard education as a means of escaping work.

I suspect that the reason why men like Rauschenbusch and Ellwood speak of our American civilization as half pagan and half Christian, is that they have recognized that while the great ideals of right and freedom and justice and dignity of personality are really at the root of our modern progress, these ideals have not yet succeeded in conquering the age-long habits of the jungle, and indeed that in some of their manifestations the very blessings of our time are bent into unfortunate shapes by the old pagan ideas of the love of personal power and the delight in personal pleasure.

Rights and Duties

I said a moment ago that if our civilization were truly Christian there would be no struggle for rights, for rights would be conceded; and that remark, I think, leads us to the bridge

that spans the chasm between a non-Christian and a Christian program for society. For what are rights? Is not our insistence upon our rights simply a means of serving notice upon somebody else that he is neglecting his duty toward us? Are not rights and duties correlative terms. My right is your duty, and my duty your right. May I call any privilege of mine a right unless it represents somebody else's duty to me? Will you concede to me any right that you would not be obliged to admit becomes your duty toward me? The struggle for right comes to be the same thing as an effort to tell other people what their duty is toward the individual or the class asserting the right. To put the matter bluntly, *if we were to transfer the emphasis in human relations upon our duty to others, rather than upon the rights due us from others, we would at once Christianize our civilization.* Is not that the central idea in the Golden Rule? If I do unto you as I would like to have you do unto me, I have suggested to you as well as to myself a rule of conduct, a rule based on the assertion of mutual obligations.

The difficulty of actually securing progress

by depending entirely upon insistence upon rights is worth a moment's consideration. First of all, insistence upon rights tends to minimize the idea of duty. In spite of the fact that when I assert my right I really assert your duty, your response to my demand is likely to be, not a recognition of your duty, but the assertion of some other right of yours, that is the assertion of my duty. Psychologically, the effect of a demand for rights is to stir counter-demands for rights. If there were a perfect balance, if every time I claimed a right you claimed an equally good right, then we would both be led to do our duty to each other. But that brings us to a second difficulty, namely, that the very habit of insisting upon my rights gets me into the mood of thinking that every man's hand is against me. It makes me still more inclined to fight for further rights. It tends to take away that keen sense of obligation which lies at the very foundation of human relationships.

Again we conclude that if we could persuade people to emphasize their own duties more strongly than they emphasize their own rights, and to give only minor attention to telling other

people what their duties are, human progress would be much more rapid, justice would be much more in evidence, and the Christian spirit would have greater sway.

I am quite mindful that we usually regard the word *duty* as something hard and unpleasant, something distasteful and cold-blooded, perhaps something even that constantly takes the joy out of life. Perhaps we might use the word *love* in place of *duty* if we had not become so habituated to thinking of love as something soft, merely good, sentimental. Of course love, as Jesus used the word, is virile, masculine, powerful, although perfectly sympathetic and friendly as well. Let us try to think of loving duty, or duty-centered love, as the first term in a Christian program, as the fundamental attitude of the mind of people belonging to a Christian community, as the main force to be released in the building of a real Kingdom of God.

Obligation as a Christian Principle

Have we not indicated the parting of the ways? Is not the main distinction between a non-Christian and a Christian attitude that the

one is motivated mainly by the love of power, the demand for privilege, the insistence upon rights; while the other seeks to know one's obligations, one's duties, one's chance to help, one's ability to serve? Self-getting and self-indulgence are essentially pagan; self-giving is essentially Christian.

There is, however, another approach to the answer to the question, "What makes a thing Christian?" or "What is a Christian program?" and this should now command our brief consideration. This approach has to do with something fundamental lying back of this distinction between rights and duties, between power and service, between self-indulgence and self-giving. Or perhaps it is really an analysis of the purpose of obligation. At any rate it has to do with purpose; for, as John Bascom has said, "The real solution of the problem of individual growth is the discovery of some adequate purpose to which all one's powers may be directed." And so we must ask ourselves, What are the ends of living?

Why Are We Here?

Is there any other adequate answer than that

we are here to grow, that each human being during his life on the earth should come to his largest possible capacity? And this is not only personal, but racial. The development of a race of men who represent the maximum possibilities of human character is the largest outlook for humanity which the mind of man has been able to conceive. We are on the road toward perfection, individually and collectively, or else there is no meaning whatever to life. This character building, on the part of every individual, calls for a healthy body, a clear mind, a firm will, a friendly attitude, a consciousness of the possibilities of the human soul.

There will be those who will say at once, "But this is a selfish objective; it assumes that the very thing you have objected to, the emphasis upon self, is to be erected into the main goal of life." Not so; for the moment we analyze the conditions of growth, we find that it must follow the law of indirection, that it is a by-product of many activities. We cannot by taking thought add unto our stature. We cannot indeed grow solely by a self-centered process of culture, or by forever seeking our

rights. The struggle for the life of others induces more growth than the struggle for one's own life. The development of a sound body and a clear mind and a firm will and a free spirit, not primarily for the sake of possessing those qualities, but primarily in order that the improved man may be of larger use to his fellow men, is the surest, sanest way to individual development.

However, a great stumblingblock fills our pathway. How often we hear it said, "Human nature is pretty much the same as it was two thousand years ago," or "You cannot change human nature." We cannot deny that oftentimes if we take the veneer off our civilization we find barbarism. And we are even sometimes moved to admit that if sufficiently tempted no man is safe. Another aspect of this same difficulty is exemplified in the statement of George Herbert Palmer when he said that ten per cent of all people are constitutionally sour, for we immediately ask what per cent of people are constitutionally critical, or mean, or hateful, or jealous, or impure. We are obliged to recognize these unlovely things about our human nature. They are here. Our

attitude toward these difficulties determines our attitude toward a Christian program for society. If the human race is not improvable, our whole theory as to the great ends of life falls to pieces. Indeed, if human nature is not improvable, what is the use of living? Let us give our difficulty full evaluation. Yet difficult as is the task of changing habits, and especially of purifying the waters of life at their source if they have been contaminated, the truth remains that Christianity deliberately seeks to make men over. It proposes to eliminate these unlovely things if it can, at least to subordinate them. That is what Christianity is for. It is to remake men, to give them a re-birth, to change the type of manhood and womanhood. It is a reconstruction, a re-building. It is, if you please, to "amend the constitution" in the case of those who are constitutionally sour, or critical, or jealous. If human nature were perfect, or if it were hopeless to improve, in either case there would be no need for Christianity. This idea of moral fatalism, whether it comes out in the individual who says and often takes pride in saying, "I am built so and so. I have these frailties and that is all

there is to it," or whether it takes the form of pessimistic unbelief in the possibilities of human progress on the moral side, is equally repellent and equally untrue. Good and evil are still in battle arrayed, and will be for endless generations. The task of Christianity is to influence all the innate tendencies of humankind to good and to set up motives that will gradually subdue the bad. It is a terrific battle. It is Armageddon. But it is not a hopeless fight; indeed it is a sure victory for the good.

An English book entitled "Recent Developments in European Thought" has a stimulating introduction in which are these words: "The trainer of youth dealing with human nature in its growth puts no limitation to its powers of goodness and activity. He deplores the want of wise methods in the past, and if he errs at all, it is in an excess of optimism in believing that with new methods we may make a new man. On this enlargement of the soul we build the future."

The Means of Growth

No layman has better stated the means by which the individual develops toward perfec-

tion than Dr. Richard Cabot in his book "What Men Live By." In briefest outline, the means are as follows: Work; play; love; worship. This formula we may fairly interpret as

Work, for both self and others;
Play, with others;
Love, for others;
Worship of a common Father.

All of these activities must be aimed at definite things. They all involve others than one's self. They all represent an out-giving. They spell the idea of self-culture for the sake of being serviceable. They represent the interplay of conscious self-culture and conscious self-giving. To quote Bascom again, "When we cultivate all our powers and find their adequate use and reward in a pursuit of the well-being of men, we have attained the primary conditions of individual growth." Service, then, is the real means of personal growth. Using our powers for the well-being of men is the sure way to the goal of life. He that would save his life must lose it. He that would be first among you must be the servant of all.

Motives

It appears then that the motive of service is essential to growth. But how can we be sure of motive? Are we certain of our own motives? Do not most of us act from mixed motives? Surely we must be cautious of judging the motives of others. Can we test motives except by deciding whether the result is what it ought to be? We can and will decide whether the action or the word *seems* to be Christian in spirit. But after all the main thing is, what effect does the word or the act really have upon people? It must seem to be intended for good; but mere intention is not sufficient. The despot may be beneficent, the feudal lord may be friendly, the king may be kindly; and yet the interests of society may require that we abolish the despot, the feudal lord, and the king.

We have to come back to the principle that we can go no farther than to judge men or urge motives except in terms of worth-while results. We *must* judge the tree by its fruits, though we may not know what is going on within the tree. Does a particular thing make for character? Is it a clear-cut obligation? Is

it fair to the community as a whole? Does it have the sanctions of service, that is, does it secure the common good?

I recall vividly a gathering with some Chinese leaders of the "New Thought Movement," in the inner recesses of a great Chinese restaurant in Peking. These men, all young, were mostly avowed atheists. We were discussing the program of Christian education in China. They said they welcomed the work of the missionary in education, but they thought it ought to be strictly educational and not in any way tied up with Christian propaganda. When we told them we held that the Christian teaching, the Christian spirit of service, were essential to education, they asserted that they themselves were thorough believers in social service. They felt keenly that the humanitarian aspect of civilization was its most significant aspect, and they approved an education that led men and women to service to their fellows; "but," they said, "why call it Christianity?"

Why, indeed, call it Christianity? Well, as Christians we need not be too particular about definitions. Why need we insist rigidly upon

specific formulas for either individual or group action, even on the ground that Jesus framed them? Are we not rather to accept any solution of a modern problem that is in accordance with the spirit and the attitude of the Master? For that, after all, is the vital and sufficient test. Suppose some do call it humanitarianism. Suppose some do deny that it is Christian. What matter, so long as it exemplifies the spirit of Jesus? Yet we are forced to ask ourselves,

What Is the Religious Dynamic in Motive?

It seems to me that in making a Christian program for society we have here another of those test questions that we cannot dodge. We have been so accustomed in times gone by, and some groups are still accustomed to-day, the moment Christianity is mentioned to think of it either as springing from the authority of the Church or from the authority of the Book, whereas in its essence Christianity lies mainly in the authority of a personality; and, let us observe again, not in the authority of a formula or dogma asserted by the person, but in the authority that comes from an attitude, a spirit.

The people of His time listened to Jesus as one who spoke with authority, but it is evident that this authority of Jesus was not the authority of the existing religious establishment nor of the recognized religious leaders of the time who interpreted the law and the prophets. The "common people," who "heard him gladly," did not analyze Jesus' teachings. They were tremendously impressed by His personality. Can we believe that it was anything less than the effulgence of this great loving heart, the power of this marvelous self-giving personality who walked among men, that made him Master? He interpreted God to men, and men to themselves. He both reflected the character of God and revealed the possibilities of men.

Some one has said that the theology of Jesus consisted chiefly in his idea of the Fatherhood of God, and that Jesus' test of allegiance to the Father lay in attempting to secure a true brotherhood of man. If so, then faith in God and in his purpose for men must be recognized as central in a Christian program for society. But its corollary is the fact that men are to work out God's purpose for them in terms of

mutual helpfulness and of common allegiance to the great goal of human living.

I am afraid that as a layman I have been wading in rather deep waters. What I have really tried to do, however, is simply to think through as any layman may, and without too much regard for the literature or the phraseology of the conventional discussions, the main ideas that seem to underlie the distinctions between what is Christian and what is not Christian, as we consider the actual world of men at their daily work. It is argued that the main test of a Christian program is that it invokes the sense of obligation as the very first term in a man's attitude; that this sense of obligation, however, leads us to consider the ends of living; that the great objective of life is the search for the highest possible human development; that the great means of growth are in activities all within our reach; that for the fullest growth there must be adequate motives; and that the only adequate motive lies in an effort to become as conscious of God as Jesus was, and in our dealings with our fellows to exemplify the spirit of love and service of which Jesus was the supreme example.

We need, however, to make an application of these principles in terms of something that is rather definite and concrete. Otherwise we lose ourselves in mere good wishes or, at the most, good resolves. And so we now ask:

WHAT ARE THE ELEMENTS OF A CHRISTIAN PROGRAM?

1. *For Every Man* HIS *Chance*

If we are to recognize the worth of persons, we cannot possibly avoid giving every person his chance to be worth all he can be. If our first duty is to grow, to make use of all our powers, to develop completely in body, mind, and soul, to live rather than to dry up, to reach fullness of life rather than to starve life, then we must have our chance. But we have no more right to this chance than has any one else. So we recognize the worth of the other man and the worth of other men, and our duty to give them every opportunity to realize and express their own life.

Nor is it enough that we shall simply offer an opportunity for each one to grow. The Christian program calls upon us to encourage

and to stimulate individuals to make use of their opportunity. It is said that oftentimes in China, a man falling overboard from a boat will be allowed to drown under the very eyes of those fellow Chinese who might rescue him. The Christian spirit will not permit even a would-be suicide to drown; people are to be saved in spite of themselves. Our whole missionary enterprise is based on the determination of the Christian to see that others have life.

I think, too, that the idea of tolerance as exemplifying the Christian spirit comes in at this point. We are not thinking of course of tolerance of wrong or of tolerance as simply straddling. Tolerance means sympathy. It means also a rigid adherence to the right, to the ideal. It recognizes, however, the fact of human weaknesses, the inability of all of us to live up to our ideals. It makes allowances. It distinguishes between the sin and the sinner. It recognizes the truth of Paul's description of the two men within the breast. Tolerance with all things: in the family, in the community, in the state, in politics, in class, in religion, in racial affairs, among nations. Ah, yes, in giving

every man his chance, we have to be very sympathetic, very broad-minded, very tolerant.

This matter of giving equal opportunity to all must be something more than a mere theory. A few years ago, I attended a meeting of educators in one of our great States. A representative of the State Department of Education called attention to the fact that although the constitution of that state written nearly a hundred years ago *guaranteed* equal opportunities to all the citizens of the State, as a matter of fact, never in all that entire century had the boys and girls of the farm had equal opportunities with those of the city for an education. It is idle for us to discuss a Christian program for society unless we are prepared to insist upon real opportunity and are willing to pay the price.

2. The Common Welfare

What is true liberty? Surely not the right to do as we please. Are all men equal? Certainly not equal in capacity. The right of personal opportunity, therefore, is checked at once by the fact that we cannot stand in the way of the opportunity for others, nor will democ-

racy progress with complete satisfaction if we hold that one man is as good as another in the sense that he is as able as another. As a matter of fact, democracy needs the superior man, the expert, just as much as any other form of social organization needs him; and he should have *his* chance. We must educate the superior boy as well as the inferior boy, one equally with the other. We will not necessarily give them the same education. We will give them, however, an equal chance to get all the education that they can master. We will give each the education that fits him best for his best service to society, because in that way we minister best to his personal good. A Christian program, therefore, while it guarantees an equal chance for every man, modifies that principle at once by indicating that there must be for each his special opportunity. Social purposes and values are essential to a Christian program. One cannot be given his chance by denying another his chance. There must be a common chance.

In fact, one of the difficulties about this particular matter is that most of us think of equal opportunities in the terms of the old pagan

ambition to secure power. Now, so far as rights of property, as freedom of speech, as liberty of occupation minister to the larger good of all, they become legitimate parts of equal opportunity. But the first term in a Christian program, that is, giving each man his chance, is modified by the second term, which is that there is a common welfare, a common purpose, a common development, a common good. And when we say "common," we mean common. We cannot allow special privileges or prerogatives, or opportunities for even our most efficient social groups, to stand in the way of giving to each man a chance to develop according to his capacity, so long as that development is consistent with a similar chance for every man.

3. *Morals in a Crowded World*

I think the major part of our difficulties at the present time, although not all of them, grow out of the fact that we are attempting to apply ethical principles gained out of an experience with a comparatively simple life, to a situation that is extremely complex. If I am a teacher and my neighbor is a coal miner,

we ought to be able to work out our mutual relations and our mutual services in a fairly satisfactory way. I teach his children and he keeps my house warm. But when I live five hundred miles away from this miner and he is one of hundreds of thousands of other miners, and they are working in a mine that is managed by still another group of people who do not do the actual work of mining, and this managerial group represents not their own persons but the persons of still other numerous people, a set of owners in the form of stockholders who know nothing directly about the mine and are not interested in the mine except as it brings them an income from their investment, and the coal is brought to me over transportation lines that represent still other services and is managed by still other groups, and my coal is delivered to me by several other sets of people who have no interest in either the miner or me, and expect to take toll for the service they render, I find myself in a situation that makes it next to impossible for me to deal justly with my friend the miner. As a matter of fact, I do not deal with him at all. Yet I am profoundly affected by what he does and

by what happens to him. And presumably he is similarly concerned about me.

What we are obliged to discover, if we can, in a Christian program is how not only the rights of groups, but the obligations of groups, can be defined and influenced, just as we think we would like to define and influence the sense of personal rights and obligation between individuals. How to do it is our problem. One way of putting our question is, "How to be moral in a highly organized society." We have to settle such questions as to how to secure fair dealing, the relation between profits and service, advantages and disadvantages of industrial competition, and a hundred other matters of like significance and difficulty. The most that we can do at this hour is to suggest two or three considerations that have, I think, a rather vital bearing upon this question of group morals, or, as I would prefer to put it, of collective religion.

(1) And first of all, I should like to say a word about the righteousness of justice. We have already called attention to the fact that the struggle for rights may lead us astray.

But we must remember that as human nature is constituted, resentment of ill treatment is in reality a virtue, or at least it is a virtue so long as the ill treatment deprives us of valid essentials to growth, in other words, if it represents the failure of some one else to do his duty. Oh, if we only had the power always to see our duty without being reminded of it; but most of us must be prodded. And so there is a very real sense in which the class struggles, let us say for industrial rights, may be defended fully from the standpoint of a Christian program, because it is only in this way that every man can have his chance, only in this way that the common good comes to be recognized.

(2) Let us remember too that there is a morality in efficiency. If I attempt a piece of work and do it poorly, I do a grave injustice to my fellows. A train is wrecked and it is shown afterwards that there was a defective rail. Somewhere some man was inefficient, consciously or unconsciously, and his fellows suffered the consequences. Our American people particularly need to learn the immorality

of waste, as well as the immorality of skimping our job. We do a grave injustice to our fellows when we loaf at our task.

(3) But we cannot admit that inefficiency is immoral unless we also admit that efficiency is moral. And here we strike I think one of our very greatest difficulties. The "iron man" is tremendously efficient, but he tends to spoil the man of flesh and spirit. How then can such efficiency be moral? Well, evidently there are limitations to the morality of efficiency. Evidently a higher principle must be invoked. And is not the principle this, that industrial efficiency must be gauged not merely by its return in terms of things made, but also in terms of the effect of the process upon those who participate in it? This brings us, does it not, to a consideration of the correlation of profits and service. Business is based upon the idea of profits. Well, what is an honest profit? Has anybody any right to profit from a business that does not serve humankind? Is serving humankind giving them something they want, whether it be deleterious to them or not? These are serious questions. I see no answer except by invoking the general con-

sideration that after all the effect upon the character of people must be the vital test of the efficiency of industry and business, that in some way the productive processes must be so arranged, the scale of profits so adjusted, that the welfare of people shall be the main concern.

We may put the matter another way. We may use science for man's benefit or his destruction. One scientist isolates a disease germ, another compounds a deadly gas. Explosives are used to clear land for crops and to blow a whole platoon into eternity. We have the same need for determining the best use for economic laws as we have the laws of science. Shall business make or unmake men? There is of course but one answer. A business must be tested by profits, yes, but not alone by profits, and, in fact, in the long run, not chiefly by profits.

Another aspect of the problem of reconciling ethics and efficiency is suggested by the dictum that "this is a competitive world." It *is* a competitive world. Individual and racial rivalries are almost the most conspicuous phenomena of life. The economist even asserts that

human progress is due, not to the desire of the individual or the group to improve, but to the desire to excel some one else. I see no solution except in the effort to substitute competition in effective service for rivalry in acquiring and possessing and displaying.

Evidently, there is little hope that we can make progress in this labyrinth of problems and difficulties, unless we can create a group conscience, develop group morality, learn how groups may deal with one another on much the same basis of ethical relationships as high-minded individuals may use together. The worker must have the joy of work. He must have the spirit of service. He must have the sense of personal obligation. Otherwise we cannot have a Christian civilization in an industrial age.

4. *The Good of All Humankind*

We may not stop here in the application of the Christian principle of obligation, of pouring forth the spirit and attitude of love and friendliness. Our sympathies must not be parochial and narrow. They must be as wide as the human race. Here come all such ques-

tions as antagonism between industrial groups and social strata, and races of entirely different origin and nature from our own, the mitigation of excessive nationalism. This problem is, I think, largely a matter of balancing of loyalties. Surely one must "to his own self be true"; that is, he must be loyal to himself. He will be loyal to his family. One is expected to be loyal to his community, to his class, to any organization to which he has joined, to the state, to the nation. But why stop here? Is there not also an obligation of loyalty to all humankind? And what are the largest loyalties, let me ask you? To one's self, to one's family, to one's community, to one's class, to one's favorite institution, to the state in which one happens to live, to the nation whose flag is our own, to the race in which we happen to be born, to the whole world of men and women? We cannot stop short of world thinking and world obligations. For as another has said: "Most of all for the healing of the world is the greater soul needed, with the world consciousness, some knowledge, some sympathy, some hope for all mankind."

5. *The Inner Life*

Social programs as a rule deal with the conditions under which people are to work and live. There can be no doubt that it is the business of a Christian democracy to make a physical and social environment favorable for all. There is the possibility, no doubt, of making things too easy, too comfortable; but in general we may disregard that possibility and insist that society shall remove all untoward and limiting conditions for human development. Religion should lead people into such regions of the inner life that they can measurably fulfill this life in any environment, favorable or unfavorable. True, this is a counsel of perfection, but it points the way toward one of the important aspects of the service of religion. It means such nourishment for the human soul as shall give capacity and power in any atmosphere. It puts iron into the soul. It enables a man to meet disappointment, difficulty, the limitations of life (sometimes the hardest of all difficulties to endure), disease, death itself. No doubt a pagan world would try to have things reasonably comfortable, at least for some people; Christianity would ask

people to rise above the conditions that life may bring. Far be it from me to advocate acquiescence in any injustices. But we must learn to live even if we do not have luxury or comfort, or even necessities. And we must learn to live grandly and as completely as possible, albeit under restrictions and in a narrow place. The real triumph of the Christian spirit is to rise above circumstances. Any Christian program that fails to stress the dominance of this inner life is an inadequate program.

For this inner life is the very center of individuality. Out of the heart are the issues of life—human loves and hates, all thoughts and imaginings, the fountain of desire and of hope and of fear. No matter how successful we are in expressing our thought, there still remains a vast region of which others cannot know. No matter how loving and tender, there still remain depths of affection that no one can recognize. No matter how open-minded and unreserved, we still cannot be fully known to our most intimate friends. It is in the inner life that the great battles for character are fought, that the great attitudes of mind, such as the spirit of worship and of beauty and of

peace, have their citadels. It is here that character breaks down if it falls, not always by assault from without but by treason from within. It is here too that true strength roots itself so that the winds of outward circumstance may do their worst; they cannot reach the soul. Therefore, each man and each woman must be given food for this inner life. No teaching, no activity, that does not reach to the heart of man is thoroughly Christian. And so our Christian program must take account of the power of this inner life and must make provision for its nurture and its guidance. Says Amiel in his Journal: "To win through peace, a man needs to feel himself in the right road, at the point where God would have him to be—in order with God and the universe. This faith gives strength and calm." One of the most insidious dangers of our modern life is to be content to re-form the outer conditions of life rather than to re-form the inner spirit of life.

HOW DOES THE PROGRAM AFFECT PEOPLE?

Quality of People, Not Quantity of Things

We have indicated five elements of a Christian program: that it shall give every man his chance to develop to capacity; that this development shall be in harmony with and on behalf of the welfare of others; that we must learn how to be moral in a crowded world where groups deal with groups as well as individuals with individuals; that there must be a world unity and world spirit; and that we must sustain and nourish the inner fortress of the soul.

Just as we indicated that the parting of the ways between a non-Christian and a Christian civilization lay in turning toward and cultivating the sense of duty rather than securing rights, so the sum total of the Christian program can also be put into one sentence, namely, that all human activities and human institutions are to be judged by their effect upon the essential quality of people. Our test of modern industry cannot be profit alone, but what sort of men and women does it produce? We do not expect to have business carried on long

at a financial loss, but after all what does business contribute to the essential growth of men and women? In other words, the great difference between the Christian program and any other is that the Christian program insists that the organization and life of society shall result in better and happier people. From the economic point of view a business will be judged by its profits, but from the Christian point of view the great test will be what effect does it have upon those who engage in it and those whom it serves, for we know perfectly well that a venture may be profitable financially and detrimental to people. The Christian must believe that no matter how profitable the business, it is not a success unless in all its ramifications it makes for development of personality, for enrichment of character. The Christian program does not deny the validity of financial profit as one test of success. It simply insists that this is not the sole, nor the final test.

I suspect that right at this point lies the answer to the question, "What is the future of socialism?" (I use the term in its broadest sense.) Suppose business privately owned and privately conducted, although financially suc-

cessful, should continue to fail to meet this Christian test of advancing the quality of people. Or suppose it militates against the real welfare of human beings. What is society going to do about it? Suppose for example that the price of success on the humanitarian side is such a lack of profit on the financial side that the business cannot be kept up by private individuals. Or suppose, even, that the business is absolutely necessary to society, but cannot be made profitable financially. Obviously a Christian society will provide some means of carrying on the business.

The starting point in the Christian program then means a radical departure from the commonly accepted view of the province of industrial life. It proposes to substitute the spirit of service as the controlling motive in life's work rather than the spirit of gain; and so its test of the success of a social program is always what happens to people under the program. It proposes further to discard a program that does not enable men and women to grow in body, mind, and spirit toward that perfection which is the goal of human life.

A Good Statement of the Case

In the volume already referred to, issued by the Committee on the War and the Religious Outlook, entitled "The Church and Industrial Reconstruction," is the following list of principles which it is stated are implied in Jesus' doctrine of the Kingdom of God, and which are the standards by which our own social life must be judged. These principles are:

1. The supreme worth of personality in the sight of God,
2. The brotherhood of all men as children of one Father,
3. The obligation of service to one's fellows,
4. The law of love as the ruling motive of life,
5. The duty of faith in God and in humanity.

And then the report goes on to say:

As to the specific application of these principles, there may be wide divergence, but not as to the principles themselves. Whatever else they may or may not believe, Christians are at one in holding that man as man has value for God; that he is a member of a family of

which Christ is the elder brother; that the members of the family are to be united in mutual service and helpfulness; that the way of life in this family is love; that it is the duty of each to believe the best of his fellows because of his faith in the loving purpose of the God upon whom all alike depend.

A Christian Democracy

After all that has been said, we may well summarize the whole purpose of a Christian program by saying that it is an effort to establish a Christian Democracy.

Chapter Three

SOME APPLICATIONS TO RURAL AFFAIRS

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A PROGRAM

1. *That Every Farmer May Have His Chance*

(1) *The farmer must have access to the land on terms that give him the largest possible personal freedom and encouragement, and that likewise most fully assure society that the land will be used to the best advantage to society.* We are to assume that the land with all its resources belongs to society as a whole. This is quite as true of the land used for growing crops as it is of land that produces trees or copper or oil or water power. The justification of private ownership of these resources hinges upon the use that is made of them—whether the individual owners get the main advantage or whether the advantage is fully shared with society.

Whatever may be the facts with respect to

other land, history seems to show that when farm land is divided into comparatively small parcels and put in charge of the actual tillers, on terms of legal ownership, a better use is made of it than when it is held in any other form. Agricultural students the world over put a premium upon the personal ownership of a tract of farm land large enough for the maintenance of a single family under typical or average standards of living of the time. On these grounds statesmen in Europe have encouraged "peasant proprietorship." American "homestead" legislation had the same end in view.

There is no doubt but a system of permanent tenancy like that in England may bring satisfactory economic results both to farmer and consumer. But it is questionable whether the social and personal results are as good as in the case of private ownership. That, however, is largely an academic question in America. With us the main issue lies not only in the increase in tenancy during the past generation, but in the fact that so large a proportion of this is of a highly transient nature. In so far as tenant farming is one of the steps

toward ultimate ownership, it is good rather than bad; in so far as tenancy may become relatively permanent on terms fair to tenant as well as to owner, the results may be at least not wholly bad. But a system of transient tenancy makes inevitably for poor farming, for meager community life, and as a rule gives the individual tenant small chance for economic success.

Access to farming land is becoming year by year more difficult and will continue to be so except as vigorous steps are taken to remedy the difficulty. The virgin lands have been pretty well occupied and farm land values are increasing as a consequence. To insure easy access to land will require a thoroughly developed system of farm credits, both long term and short term, on easy payment plans, but so guarded as not to encourage mere speculation nor the assumption of over-capitalization, and particularly guarded against the incurring of heavy financial responsibility by those in any way likely not to succeed in the venture. It will not be long moreover before we will need added legislation in the various states in America protecting the tenant and encouraging

permanent tenancy or ultimate ownership, preferably the latter.

(2) *"A Fair Share of the Consumer's Dollar."* This quotation is a rather crude and popular way of phrasing a fundamental truth with reference to giving every farmer his chance. As usually put, not all the story is told. There is a widely used statement, for example, to the effect that the farmer gets only one-third of the consumer's dollar. This proportion is assumed not only as universally prevalent, but as an unfair share. The fact, however, is not universally true. The farmer's portion varies widely with different crops, in different regions of the country, and in different years. Moreover, for certain products, the marketing of which has been organized on exceedingly efficient lines, one-third of the retail price for the product is all that can be gotten by the grower, all that is expected, and is apparently satisfactory. The will to produce is as yet almost wholly unorganized in America, and to a large extent unintelligent. Not long ago much was said in some of the agricultural papers of the fact that a certain farmer had sold his potatoes for 20 cents a bushel and had

discovered that the consumer who bought those potatoes had paid 50 cents a peck. That seems like a gross injustice to the farmer. But it was an equally gross injustice to the consumer, for these potatoes had been marketed at a distance of nearly a thousand miles from where they were grown. There is terrible waste in our "hodgepodge" method of relating production to consumer's need. Our remarkable transportation system fails to a large extent to supply our markets with products grown within relatively local areas or regions. We should attempt to devise a measurably scientific zoning or allocation of agricultural production in terms of consumers' demand.

With these qualifications, however, we may say, and it should be said as vigorously as possible, that the American farmer is handicapped with respect to the return he gets for his investment and his labor. There are prosperous individual farmers in almost every community, and there are many prosperous farming communities. Indeed there are even relatively large areas of farming country where the farmers, as they would say, are doing "reasonably well"; but the average income of

the farm family in America is all too small for American standards of living. Making allowances for discrepancies in figures and for the fact that the farmer does or at least can get a substantial share of his food supplies from his own farm, it seems to be a fact that not only is the average income of the farm family far below the social student's estimate of minimum need, but even considerably below the average actual income that the workers of the cities now receive.

Many farmers believe sincerely that the reason why they do not get a larger share of the consumer's dollar is that they are being deliberately robbed by the middlemen. There is no proof that this is the truth. There is ample proof, however, that the cost of distribution of soil-grown products under the present plan is in general too high. In some cases there are too many intermediaries between the farm and the consumer's table. Often there are too many tolls taken and sometimes these tolls are extravagantly large. There is too much quantitative waste in the products themselves, especially with the perishables and the semi-perishables. The great staples are often handled in

a way to deprive the grower of the full value of the market. It was interesting to note recently a statement that with the price of cotton going up to 30 cents a pound, the beneficiaries were not the growers of cotton but the handlers of cotton. The growers of cotton evidently cannot take advantage of changes of this sort in the market unless collectively or individually they have capital enough to carry the crop until the market needs it. Moreover, they must take their chances of loss as well as of gain due to changes in market conditions. Herein lies a need for a reformation in our marketing system.

While there are those who deny the right of the wage worker to a living wage, there is little doubt but the principle will eventually have fairly complete recognition and that a wage sufficient to meet basic human needs will be the first charge upon any industrial organization. I asked a thoughtful gentleman the other day how we could guarantee to the farmer the equivalent of a living wage. My friend said that it was not necessary in the case of the farmer because he could make his own living on his own farm. This was entirely true in

the old days of the self-sufficing farm, and it is to quite an extent true to-day. But it should be realized both by farmers and by the food consuming part of society that under the present régime of commercial agriculture, when barter has practically disappeared and farmers must sell products for cash in order to buy other things which they do not themselves produce, there disappears in part at least the old difference between the wage earner and the farmer in respect to source of real income. Indeed it is a fair question whether the majority of our farmers should not make their farm unit more nearly self-sufficing. It has been stated recently that forty per cent of our American farmers buy a considerable part of their food supply, more particularly canned fruits and vegetables, and even sometimes fresh fruits. This habit grows out of a high degree of specialization, the vastly increased use of machinery, the scarcity of farm labor, and a consequent belief that the farmer can use his time to better advantage than "fussing with a garden." The substitution of canned fruits and vegetables for fresh fruits and vegetables is poor economy from the dietetic point of view

and, even if each individual farmer cannot grow his own, every farm community ought to grow its own supply.

However, we cannot take time for further details. This question of a fair share is the most pressing agricultural matter of the time so far as the economic interests of working farmers are concerned. If the farmer is to have his chance, if he is to stay upon the farm, or at least if he is to be more than an underling, he must have a sufficient income to maintain a good standard of living.

(3) *The farmer should have an adequate chance for agricultural education.* The farmer cannot blame others for all of his ills. There is a vast amount of poor farming in America, some of it due to lack of knowledge, some of it due to lack of energy or to poor management. It is foolish not to recognize these facts. Doubtless the establishment of faith on the part of the masses of farmers that they will get a square deal when they sell, will be a great stimulus to them in reducing costs of production and in otherwise making their farms more efficient. It is probably true that the American farmer is given a better chance than the farm-

ers of almost any other nation to get technical education, although it cannot be said that the system is yet doing its perfect work. There are still vast improvements to be made in the system itself, and there is even greater need of stimulating the farmers to take advantage of all that modern science has to teach them. Only a small proportion of the boys who come into farming year by year have had any specific education for farming. Our system of secondary schools of agriculture is still in the making.

An adequate system of agricultural education will deal not only with production, but with every aspect of the rural question, whether economic, political, or social. Moreover, it will not stop even there; it will provide and develop a system of adult education to meet all the needs of farmers as citizens and intelligent members of a democracy.

(4) *There must be adequate social institutions for the countryside.* Perhaps this is one of the severest tests of our rural civilization. Can it maintain schools, churches, and in fact all necessary institutional life on a basis that will give the farmer an equal social chance with

the dweller in the city? It is a hard saying, but probably a true one that the tendency is the other way. As cities grow in numbers and in wealth, they have the ability to build great institutions. It does not follow that the education a boy receives in a million-dollar schoolhouse will be a thousand times better than that received by the boy in the little lonesome frame district schoolhouse so characteristic of our rural landscape in America. But it is wholly unreasonable to expect that a great system of rural education can be maintained on a level with that of the cities unless the quality of the teaching, the training of the teacher, and in some measure the extent and value of the equipment, are somewhere near equal. And that is not the case to-day, taking the country as a whole.

And so with the Church. The effectiveness of the Church does not depend upon great cathedrals nor eloquent preachers. Some of the most genuinely religious people in the world are members of small rural churches and some of the most effective pastoral service is rendered by underpaid country preachers. But it is idle to believe that excessively small con-

gregations, especially of competing sects, often employing preachers poorly trained and paying them laborer's wages, can in any community, in the long run, serve that community as the Church ought to serve.

Probably we have too many organizations and associations in our cities. But we cannot get on without collective action, and our question is, "Is the countryside maintaining on the whole as effective social organization and as efficient social institutions as the cities?" It is not. I think we must insure the farmer better and more efficient institutions if we are to give him his chance.

(5) At this point I want to speak more fully of *the need of more adequate schooling for farm boys and girls.* Unfortunately in one way, perhaps fortunately in another, education is under fire. There is a widespread dissatisfaction with results. There was never so much criticism of our American education as we have to-day, not only on the part of the public, but on the part of educators themselves. Frankly, there is no agreement among educators as to ends or means. On the part of legislators there is an inclination to prune educational

budgets. On the other hand the discussion has brought out such disturbing comparisons as, for example, the amount we spend for education and the amount we spend for war preparation and reimbursement, the difference between the educational budget and the budget for such items as soft drinks, chewing gum, and so forth. To tell the truth, we have not yet put education on a statesmanlike basis.

In all this uncertainty, the country suffers more than the city. It will be extremely difficult to maintain as good a system of rural education as of urban education, but we must do it at all costs. It need not be the same system nor so elaborate a system, nor need it have so expensive equipment, but it must be just as adequate. We must never condemn our rural boys and girls to an inferior education, whether they want to stay on the farm or whether they want to leave it. The farmer must do his share in maintaining this equality of opportunity, but the cities must help. The significant point for us to consider in this discussion, however, is that if the farmer is to have *his* chance, his children must have *their* chance for a first-rate American schooling.

Without doubt the boys' and girls' agricultural clubs have been a "veritable godsend" to the children and youth of the countryside. These clubs have stimulated interest, developed enthusiasm, taught coöperation, opened up the possibilities of farming as an intellectual pursuit, broadened horizons, stirred ambitions, and given a type of training that had been largely neglected in the schools. In some States there are in motion notable "drives" on behalf of modern country school facilities.

(6) *Farm family life must be kept fine.* In no occupation is the home so intimately related to industry as on the farm. The interplay of man's interest and woman's interest, the cooperation of the entire family, the inter-relations of economic and social motives are nowhere so much in evidence as in a typical farm home. American family life is changing and many students think it is breaking down. Living in a tiny city apartment certainly is very different from living in an isolated farm home. Which is the better? Which is the more helpful from the standpoint of its effect upon society? If the farmer is to have his chance, the farm home must be made as efficient as possible

for the making of citizens. It must broaden or at least maintain its conceptions of service. Its significance cannot be too much stressed.

A severe but a fair test of rural civilization is what happens to the farm woman. More than we realize, the farm woman is the focal point in our rural civilization. Many thousands of families leave the farm for the town because of the woman's point of view. Many a young man who would like to farm gives up his hope because his wife does not want to live on the farm. So often the woman's work is sheer drudgery, with unending hours and with few social contacts, fewer even than those of the man. The ameliorating effect of the telephone and rural mail delivery and particularly of the automobile is beyond calculation. Nevertheless, the safeguarding of the higher interests of the wife and mother is after all one of the crucial points in a rural program.

(7) *In general the farmer must have a satisfying country life.* He must feel that he has at least a measure of the common comforts of his time, that his family can get an education, that they can have reasonable pleasures,

that they are not looked down upon socially, that they have opportunity to grow. A satisfying country life means that on the whole those who continue to live in the country do so because they like it, or even prefer it beyond any other form of work or living. This large general result is made up of many items, but it is fundamental in a program that gives every farmer his chance.

(8) *Personal Growth in a Farm Environment.* Farming at its best, I believe, will "manufacture men" at least as thoroughly as can city life. For one reason, there is room to grow. The family life may be wholesome, the roots of character may run deep into the soil, and the branches and leaves of personality may stretch out into the free air and sunlight. We have here almost ideal conditions for human living. If we can remove stark drudgery, if we can banish undesirable provincialism, if we can secure reasonable contacts with other folk, if we can maintain adequate social institutions, we shall have almost perfect conditions for the development of the human spirit. The growth of personality, individual freedom, joy in work, health of body, contact with nature,

these ought to be characteristic of the rural environment.

The farmer has a great advantage in the fact of his personal responsibility. He is manager as well as worker. He must have initiative. He is largely his own master. He is not merely a cog in the wheel. Surely this type of life must have great educational advantages.

Let us remember the value of labor as Means of Growth. Let us keep bringing back to our minds the fact that work is not a curse, but a blessing. It is a strange paradox of human nature that we think we envy the people who do not have to work. We like to look forward to the time when we will not have to work, although we condemn the idler. We know perfectly well that for most of us idleness would be misery. Could any one invent anything more diabolical, more sure to destroy manhood and womanhood, than a scheme of society in which nobody would have to work? The Christian view of work then calls for an interpretation of the real meaning of work. Shall we treat work then as a means of merely making money? May we not go about our

work not only in the spirit of service, but realizing that even drudgery has its compensation in the development of the mind and the soul of the worker?

The element of struggle is a prominent feature of the character-making value of work. It must not be supposed that peace, in the sense of acquiescence in wrong or of failure to meet issues or of surrender under difficulties, is a part of the Christian spirit. Quite the contrary. There is no word more surcharged with the Christian spirit than the word *overcome*. The farmer, for example, is sometimes thought of as following an occupation that "has no fight in it." But one of our greatest rural leaders has called attention in poetic phrase to the contrary and the true view:

"Blow, ye winds, and lay on, ye storms,
And come, ye pests in rabble swarms,
And fall, ye blights in legion forms—
I am here: I surrender not
Nor yield my place one piece or jot;—
For these are my lands
And these are my hands
And I am bone of the folk that resistlessly stands."

(L. H. Bailey.)

The farmer has to overcome the world of bugs and the world of diseases. He has to meet all the other untoward conditions of weather, such as flood and drought, frost and burning heat, hail and thunderstorms. Indeed, so much is this the case that many farmers are thought to be fatalists, and many more agnostics, with reference to the workings of a Divine providence. But this spirit of fight, this overcoming, is as fully religious as anything can be. For these difficulties are simply a part of the order of nature. We may wish that they did not exist. We may at times wonder if they are really beneficent. But there they are. I think they are beneficent, God-given, not in the sense of special immediate detailed providence, but in the great order of the universe. Man was put on the earth to subdue it. Subduing it means struggle and overcoming, conflict and victory, with always the possibility of defeat. We do not need to dwell upon the advantages that come to humankind because they have to overcome these difficulties. Obviously what is by all odds the greatest advantage is in the character-building process that comes with the task of subduing

the earth. Man has been physically and mentally and morally built up in this process, making allowance for all of the sad elements in the story of this struggle, in the injuries and bloodshed that have accompanied it. After all, it has made man what he is. And what he is to be will depend in part at least upon the terms upon which he makes his fight for compelling the earth to yield her increase to him, which, put in other words, really means compelling himself to become subject to the laws of God. For, after all, the fight is not with nature, but with man's own ignorance of nature and with his frequent unwillingness to subordinate himself to the law of nature. Rufus M. Jones has a paragraph on this point that is worth quoting:

> The farmer, in his unceasing struggle with weeds, with parasites, with pests visible and invisible, with blight and rot and uncongenial weather, sometimes feels tempted to blaspheme against the hard conditions under which he labors and to assume that an "enemy" has cursed the ground which he tills and loaded the dice of nature against him. The best cure for his "mood" is to visit the land of the bread-fruit tree, where nature does everything and

man does nothing but eat what is gratuitously given him, and to see there the kind of men you get under those kindly skies. The virile fiber of muscle, the strong manly frame, the keen active mind that meets each new "pest" with a successful invention, the spirit of conquest and courage that are revealed in the farmer at his best are no accident. They are the by-product of his battle with conditions, which if they seem to come from an "enemy" must come from one that ought to be loved for what he accomplishes.

In this connection we must discuss the use of leisure. It may seem ludicrous to talk of leisure for the farmer, especially for the farmer's wife. Yet for most farmers there are periods of leisure; even those farmers who work from sunup to sundown during the growing season often have a period of comparative leisure in the winter. The irregularity of his leisure time is one of the difficulties in the farmer's program. The man in a sedentary occupation can profitably use a number of hours during the week for play in the form of games requiring physical exercise. The farmer needs no such type of recreation. Physical labor requires longer hours for sleep

than does mental labor. The out-of-door life, with its hearty appetite for food, makes reading after a day's work discouragingly difficult. Many farmers surrender completely to these difficulties and make but poor use of their leisure. No rules can be laid down, certainly not by any one who stands outside the farm itself. But leisure there should be, and wise use of leisure.

There are really two main uses for leisure, the one for recreation and the other for relaxation. Recreation implies activity, but an activity different from that indulged in for work. Wholesome social life, games in the family, as abundant reading as possible—these are but the usual suggestions. I would like to mention another outlet for leisure, the farmer's peculiar need perhaps, growing out of his comparative isolation from other people. He should visit other farm communities and other farming States than his own, his agricultural college, his state capital, the national capital if possible. Attendance at conventions, not only agricultural, but of other types, brings him new contacts. And he should take his wife with him! He should also fre-

quently go into the city and get into contact with city interests and city points of view. He should come to feel acquainted and at home in the city. The value of these experiences in breaking down misunderstandings, in broadening one's point of view, in getting new ideas to think about, is unmistakable.

There is still another aspect of leisure, and that is the idea of *relaxation,* doing absolutely nothing—horrible thought to some people, for others a favorite mood! Let us not make light of the character-building value of profitable relaxation.

One day
I went
To the fields to rest.

The sun
Hung low
On the rim of the West.

A sparrow
Chirped
As it dropped to its nest.

And my soul
Had found
The boon of its quest.

(L. H. Bailey.)

If we value as leisure all the time that a person has for thinking of other things than the immediate task at hand, the farmer certainly is to be counted among the most fortunate of men. He has less time as well as less opportunity for amusement than the people of the cities. He meets fewer people, has a narrower range of human contacts, probably has less time for reading than the average artisan. But for brooding, meditating, thinking, allowing himself to ripen as a result of his experience and environment, he has time in abundance. He has especially the time and the incentive to think of God. He lives in a world that makes for inner peace.

Thou makest the outgoings of the morning and evening to rejoice.

Thou visitest the earth, and waterest it; thou greatly enrichest it with the river of God, which is full of water; thou preparest them corn, when thou hast so provided for it.

Thou waterest the ridges thereof abundantly; thou settlest the furrows thereof; thou makest it soft with showers; thou blessest the springing thereof.

Thou crownest the year with thy goodness; and thy paths drop fatness.

They drop upon the pastures of the wilder-

ness; and the little hills rejoice on every side.
The pastures are clothed with flocks; the valleys also are covered over with corn: They shout for joy, they also sing.

2. *That the Farmer May Serve the Common Good*

(1) The world must eat. Food, clothing, and shelter are primary wants. Practically all the facilities for furnishing these wants come from the soil. Consequently the producers of these needs are under peculiar obligations to serve the common good. *Of all people, the farmer should be most conscious of his usefulness to mankind.* The converse is true, that society is under peculiar obligation to the farmer, and from society the farmer should receive the utmost consideration. But the farmer has this advantage if we are to look at life from the Christian point of view, that he is conscious of making an absolutely fundamental contribution to society. The world could not live without him. He is essential to "maintaining the fabric of the world." He is indispensable. It has been said that industry is the conquest of nature for the service of man. We may paraphrase and say that agriculture is the conquest of the soil for the

service of man. The farmer is the steward of the soil, and the moral aspect of land ownership cannot be disregarded in the Christian program. Every little farm should be thought of by the owner as a sacred trust. The mere fact that it is small does not give the farm owner any moral privilege that does not belong to the owner of a vast estate or of immense mines.

We are entering upon an entirely new step in our economic attitude toward agriculture. We are thinking of it not as an isolated industry, but rather in terms of its place in the world's food supply. We are emphasizing the needs of humankind for food and other soil-grown products, and from this consideration we are working back to the part which the farmer should play in supplying these things.

(2) *The use of soil for the welfare of society.* The Christian farmer will seek to get the most from the land, not merely because he owes it to himself and to his family, but because he owes it to society at large to use the farm soil to its fullest capacity. We are not now discussing the moral right of the farmers as a class to restrict production, but

rather the duty of the individual farmer to use, in the best possible way, that portion of land that has been assigned to him by society, and which he holds at the option of society.

The duty to use land to the full assumes as a corollary the maintenance of the fertility of the land. Unfortunately, the farmers of the earth have not maintained soil fertility, generally speaking. True, in certain countries land has been tilled continuously for hundreds of years, and in China and in India, for example, for thousands of years; but whole empires have degenerated and even gone to pieces because they could not maintain their food supply. A recent author asserts that the fall of Rome was due primarily to the decline in soil fertility. The farmer's obligation is perfectly clear, yet many farmers never think of their duty to maintain soil fertility for future generations or for the sake of society. Plainly this duty is one of the elements in a Christian program.

(3) *The farmer must make his own peculiar contribution to national progress.* By the word *peculiar* I certainly do not mean odd or unusual, but different. Farmers as a whole, be-

cause they live in a different environment, develop particular traits and qualities. On the whole these traits and qualities are a decided asset rather than a liability to the nation. And it is the farmer's duty to state his point of view, to exert his influence in national affairs, no matter whether they immediately affect him or not. He cannot avoid this obligation and still retain his moral citizenship. He must play his part as a citizen of the nation, intelligently, sympathetically, not because he is a farmer, but because he is a man and a citizen, and because as a farmer he does have something to contribute that other people do not have.

(4) *Adjustments.* No social problem is ever solved. What we call solving problems is merely making adjustments and then readjustments as circumstances change. So with the farmer. He must constantly readjust his methods of management, and what is good for to-day may not be good for to-morrow. But he must also adjust his views; and one of his best contributions to the common good is to keep himself open-minded with respect to what is going on in the world, especially among other groups. He must recognize that he has an

obligation to the city people as well as they to him. He must not seek his rights so vigorously that he will forget that it is his duty to understand the city man's point of view.

3. *That Farming Groups May Develop the Best Possible Moral Code*

Loyalty to the best ideals. When we discuss in more detail the work of farmers' organizations, I should like to develop a few suggestions concerning how farmers' organizations may be kept in line with the fundamental principles of the Christian program. At this point, I wish merely to call attention to the need of developing a farming group-morality or class ethics, just as we all believe in developing an adequate individual morality or ethics. A good statement of this need was made not long ago by the Master of the National Grange, Mr. S. T. Lowell, in speaking of "The Spiritual Basis of the Grange." He emphasized, as you will see, the fundamental character of the idea that the farmers' organizations must be permeated with loyalty, or "fidelity," to the finest religious idealism.

There is grave danger that in this age of extreme materialism we shall drift away from the ideals of the Founders, who were actuated by a fine religious spirit, that crops out in every page of our ritual and that finds its foundation in the solemn and binding obligations we all take up on entrance to the Order. While the Founders saw with clear vision ahead the necessity of a farmers' fraternity which should protect and advance the interests of agriculture and build up the best rural life possible in America, they were wise enough to see that it must have more than this for a foundation, and that an enduring structure could be builded on no less stable a corner stone than that of Fidelity.

4. *That He May Have the World View*

I should like to quote a memorandum made to the American Peace Commission in Paris, for the reason that this emphasizes in some detail a subject that must receive constantly increasing attention from the farmers of America. It is absolutely vital that the Christian program for the rural community shall embrace the world.

The important interests of trade and labor have already been recognized in the plans for international coöperation. The equally signifi-

cant interests of agriculture have apparently thus far not been considered.

In the present crisis the farmers of nearly all countries are practically voiceless in the councils of the nations. They have no international organization, no world conference, no coöperating delegations, to speak their need and to contribute their mind to solving the common problem. Yet no question before the Peace Conference is more fundamental to world welfare than the rural question. This is true because:

(1) An adequate supply of food for all the people of the world is an essential item in a program of permanent world peace. A hungry nation or even a hungry group within a nation forms a breeding ground for discontent and revolt; a hungry world means chaos.

(2) This necessary food supply must be furnished by the farmers of the world. Together with other soil-grown products that comprise a significant portion of the raw materials of industry, this supply depends upon the toil, the effectiveness, the intelligence of those who actually work upon the land.

(3) The conservation and improvement of the soil should be one of the chief concerns in world statesmanship. No other natural resource compares with the maintenance of soil fertility in its bearing upon the future of the race. But no fiat of government nor resolution of conferences can insure the proper use

and care of the soil; only as each individual farmer intelligently tills his land and carefully, conscientiously, husbands its resources can future generations as well as the present population of the nations of the earth be assured their food. It is necessary therefore to provide adequate means of training, stimulating, and encouraging the masses of farmers in every land.

(4) In all justice, the working farmer must have the equivalent of a "living wage." Merely to grow a meager sustenance for himself and his family, with a scant surplus to sell in the market, as a result of employing all the daylight hours in hard physical labor, does not meet the terms of permanent social justice. The farmers must therefore have a reasonable reward; at the very least they must have fair play in the world's economic arrangements.

(5) The possession and use of the land by those who actually till it give guarantees of public peace, of intelligent citizenship, of human welfare, hardly acquired by any other means. Therefore the land should be controlled by those who use it. Access to ownership should be made easy, land leases should favor the worker, land proprietorship should be encouraged to the utmost.

(6) The farmer and his family are of more consequence even than the farm. Education, both industrial and cultural, is necessary to intelligent farming and to development of mind.

Good local government and health are essential elements in a democratic community. The farmer must have these fundamental requirements of manhood or become practically a slave to unending toil.

(7) If the world is to become truly and fully democratic, it is necessary that the farmers of the world should not only understand and appreciate democracy, but they should fully share in all its advantages—economic, political, and social. More than four-fifths of the huge populations of Russia, India, China, live on the land. Poland, the Czecho-Slovak territories, Jugo-Slavia, Asia Minor, Mesopotamia, Persia, all are dominantly rural. Africa, South America, and Australia are agricultural rather than industrial areas. In the United States nearly half the people live under rural conditions. In France 48 per cent of the people are farmers. Even highly urban nations such as England and Belgium are finding the farm problem acute and significant.

(8) A wise plan of international coöperation in agriculture will provide the mechanism whereby adequate and accurate facts may be obtained, organized, and interpreted; means by which governments may coöperate in spreading popular education in farming and country life and in training an effective rural leadership; legislation which protects the interests of the farmer as a producer, and simplifies and

cheapens the process of distribution of soil-grown products; and arrangements whereby the exigencies and uncertainties of climate and weather and the attacks of plant and animal diseases and pests may be guarded against so far as humanly possible.

(9) No plan of agricultural coöperation on an international basis will suffice, unless it encourages to the utmost the free organization of the farmers themselves for whatever ends they may desire—economic, social, political. Only so can agriculture be fully democratized; only so can farmers express their convictions, voice their experiences, seek an answer to their needs, and contribute their part to the rebuilding of the world. Organization for coöperative buying, selling, and credit especially should be encouraged in every nation. The effective organization of local farming communities for both industrial and social purposes is fundamental to the larger rural democracy.

(10) It is vital to the maintenance of the world settlement that an instrumentality be created to promote international coöperation among those who till the soil. Therefore,

Resolved: That the League of Nations make provision for the establishment and perpetual maintenance of means whereby the working farmers of the world shall be enabled to coöperate constantly and fully, in furnishing the world with food, in securing just

rewards for their labor, in improving their methods of farming, in enriching their land, in organizing an active and satisfying community life, and in maintaining a high degree of democratic citizenship.

In the interests of peace. The farmers are a peace-loving folk. As a rule they suffer from war more than do any other classes. Especially in modern warfare not only are farm lands ravaged almost beyond recovery, but because of the immense numbers of workingmen needed to produce the machinery of war the farmers furnish more than their share of the soldiers. May we not expect that the farmers will become the great peace propagandists of the future?

Need farm life be narrow? There are those who will say that we are asking too much of the farmer, that he lives an isolated life in his small community with comparatively narrow interests. But the possibilities of breadth of view and wideness of sympathy on the part of farmers have been beautifully put by Jay William Hudson in the words of "Abbe Pierre," who was really making a plea for the people of a farm village in France:

The fact is, there may be two very different kinds of provincialism; and any one with any discernment whatever can readily tell which is the worse. There is the provincialism of *outer experience,* on the one hand—the provincialism of the man who has been denied the opportunity of getting acquainted with the great world by actually roaming over it and coming in contact with its many-sided life; and, on the other hand, there is what I call the provincialism of the *spirit,* which means poverty, and littleness, and narrowness of the inner life. And one may have the first without having the second, and the second is more to be feared—far more—than the first, for the first is superficial, but the second reaches to the deepest currents of a man's very life! One's soul may be indeed narrow and provincial, although one has a cosmopolitan body that has traveled far and wide; and one may have a body whose eyes have never seen beyond the dawns and sunsets of his native valley, and yet have a soul whose home is no less than the infinite universe! The cosmopolitanism of the body, and the cosmopolitanism of the spirit —take your choice! Happy is he who can have both!

5. *That He May Strengthen the Inner Life*

"The soul,
Forever and forever—longer than soil is

brown and solid—longer than water ebbs and flows."

(Walt Whitman.)

The farmer deals in steadfast fashion with the brown and solid soil of which Walt Whitman sang. The farmer's feet are planted on the earth. Let Liberty Hyde Bailey again interpret:

"For he shall build on the good stout earth
That he takes from the hand of God,
And grip his place with a free man's girth
And shall strike his fires from the clod."

The farmer is fully conscious of the soul that goes on "forever and forever." He is witness, as each recurring springtime brings the renewal of the myriad forms of life, of the miracle of resurrection. He holds communion with nature in her various moods. He is himself a creator of life, in that he releases the forces that makes life. He sows his seed for the harvest. His cattle multiply and his fields yield their increase. Nature with all her manifestations and her beauties is his constant companion. To other people this contact with nature is but an occasional thing; with the

farmer it is a daily affair. The manipulation of cultivated plants and the handling and care of domestic animals work their magic upon the spirit of the man who deals with them. He has so much power with them. He can do so much for them. They yield their beneficence to him largely in proportion to the intelligence and kindness which he bestows upon them.

God speaks in many voices through the ministries of nature. The marvelous tints of the changing year, the varying lights of day and night, the altered moods of storm and calm, the grades of warmth and chill in the revolving seasons, the many sounds of animate life, all are ways in which the life of God discloses itself to our soul. To read His world with responsive heart is like a fresh revelation of His Word. (*The Daily Altar.*)

He may then learn the faith and the peace of the prophet. Undaunted by the devastating storm; full of faith in the midst of an imperfect world, he can still say:

"Though the fig-tree bears no fruit,
And there be no vintage on the vines,
Though the olive harvest fails
And the fields produce no food,

Though the flock be cut off from the fold,
And there be no herd in the stalls,
Yet I will exult in Jehovah."

We want justice for our farmers; we want prosperity for them; we want comforts for them. But, oh, my friends, we want for them, as they want for themselves, something far more valuable than justice, far more important than prosperity, far better than comfort. We want for them a chance to grow and every help and incentive to grow into the best and biggest men they can be. We want them to have the power to live and love either in poverty or in wealth. We want them strong enough to do either. We want them to possess an inner life of peace and joy, no matter what storms may rage without.

Chapter Four

THE ORGANS OF CHRISTIAN RURAL PROGRESS

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The Christian spirit will find an outlet in those social institutions and agencies that men have organized. An institution is a group of people who for certain definite ends agree to act together. If people are to exhibit the Christian spirit in their multifarious dealings with one another, they can do it mainly as these so-called social institutions or agencies act in a Christian way and get results that are essentially Christian.

It is just as important that schools and colleges shall minister to a Christian civilization as it is that the church shall do this. We cannot have a pagan system of education in a civilization that we are trying to make fully Christian. I do not argue here for propaganda concerning the teaching of religion in our public schools, and certainly I do not want to rouse sectarian differences of opinion on this point.

But we have grown too much accustomed to think that nothing is Christian unless it bears the form and is carried by the ritual of the Christian Church. What we want in all our life is an exhibition of the Christian spirit and a permeation of group activities of all sorts with the Christian ideal. We cannot here detail the ways in which our public education in America may be made fully Christian, is indeed already to a large extent Christian. For there are two great organs of society that must be discussed, the farmers' organization and the Church. However, before passing on to those items, let me mention two other matters of some importance.

1. Farmers need their own institutions; otherwise the farmers become merely the fringe of the urban groups. The country church is profoundly affected by the advent of the automobile, and it has even been assumed in some quarters that the country people will desert the church of the open country and attend, if they attend at all, the church of the neighboring village or city. If this is in any large sense a sure tendency, it means not alone the downfall of the country church, but the practical anni-

hilation of religious leadership in the country. It is all but impossible for urban institutions as such fully to serve the countryside.

This is not to assert that churches and schools and granges and other rural institutions may not be located in the village or the small town. On the contrary, it would be a wholesome thing if our rural villages could tie themselves up intimately with the surrounding countryside, and if villagers and farmers could unite in maintaining local institutions. These villages and small cities are so thoroughly dependent upon the economic welfare of the surrounding farmers that politically and socially they should work together; in fact, the villages should look countryward rather than cityward for their obligations, their interests, and their alliances. But the moment the country people are obliged to rely upon institutions that are essentially urban-minded, that moment will begin rural disintegration.

Why shouldn't the great fraternal organizations that have chapters in the farming areas develop a distinct rural community program? I refer to such bodies as the Masons, the Odd Fellows. Are there not many things in the

purposes of these organizations that can truly be called Christian? Would they not agree on a very large proportion of the items in a Christian program that we have discussed? Here is a power that perhaps has not yet been fully mobilized on behalf of the upbuilding of the countryside. If these organizations would deliberately undertake to coöperate, in their own ways and by their own means, but really to coöperate in our program, they could be a tremendous asset with reference to the permanent upbuilding of the best in our country life.

The Economic Struggle the Great Issue in a Christian Program

2. If we are to have a Christian civilization, those associations of men that deal directly and immediately with their economic interests must play a vital part. The battle ground between the non-Christian and the Christian forces lies in the question of a fair distribution of wealth. If we cannot Christianize industry, industry will paganize us. So with agriculture. The struggle for a square deal for the farmers is the immediate and pressing issue. This is

partly because justice to a great class of producers like the farmers is in itself a Christian thing; partly because it is a hopeless task to try to build adequate social institutions, as for example the Church, on a poor economic foundation; partly because it is extremely difficult to feed human souls with the bread of life until at least their minimum physical hunger is satisfied. It is equally true that the economic obligations of farmers to society are to be recognized and fostered. We must develop an economic program for the farmers that is essentially Christian, or we have lost the battle for making rural civilization thoroughly Christian.

From the Christian point of view the situation is rather fortunate, for the following reasons:

In the first place the argument that farmers are not getting their fair share in the distribution of their products is so obviously true that one may throw himself unreservedly into the fight for better things for the farmer.

Moreover, the great farmer organizations have not yet gained sufficient power so that they are tempted to use their power unfairly, and

owing to the isolation of individual farmers, and for some other reasons that we cannot here go into, it is doubtful if the agrarian movement in America is ever likely to develop a class power that will be inimical to the just interests of other classes.

An observation of Mr. Bernard M. Baruch is of value concerning the motives of the leaders of the present farmer movements: "I have met many of the leaders of the new farm movement, and I testify, in all sincerity, that they are endeavoring to deal with their problems, not as promoters of a narrow class interest, not as exploiters of the hapless consumer, not as merciless monopolists, but as honest men bent on the improvement of the common weal."

THAT FARMERS' ORGANIZATIONS MAY BE CHRISTIAN

1. The farmers should ask for fair play, never for special privilege. Without question that is the general mood of farmers. There are always two dangers, however. One danger is that when a great mass of the population becomes thoroughly organized and realizes its

strength, almost unconsciously it may ask for things because it can get them and because it is to its advantage, without weighing too carefully the effect upon other people. In other words, it practically attempts to gain special privilege. The other danger is that there may be an overweighing of the attitudes and influence of other groups, and a consequent inclination to get some advantage just because "the other fellow" has been getting the advantage. This is one of the most insidious forms of moral temptation for individuals or groups: "They all do it," or "The other fellow does it." It is temptation to pay injustice in the same coin, to justify an act because some one else does it; this is all natural and human, but unchristian, and in the long run gets us nowhere; it simply perpetuates a moral wrong.

2. The farmers should have broad sympathy for other groups, especially for labor. There has never been, except in rare instances, a warm cordiality between organized agriculture and organized labor. Numerous efforts have been made to bring them into a common platform. At the present moment the farmers are probably as critical of labor as is any other

group. They have a feeling that labor has over-reached itself. Principally they feel that the high prices which the farmers have to pay for manufactured products and for transportation are due to what they regard as the exactions of labor for high wages. The insistence of labor upon the shorter day, and particularly those occasional demands that call for such extreme terms as a five- or six-hour day, not only seem absurd to the farmers who during the growing season of crops work extremely long hours, but they feel them to be impracticable from the economic point of view. A basis for common action between labor and agriculture was recently suggested in an editorial in *The New Republic:* "Farmer and laborer could stand together on an economic program including living prices for agricultural products, living wages for labor, the elimination of waste and of unemployment." What I am pleading for, however, is an attitude of sympathy for labor. Farmers should remember that labor has been compelled to organize in order to get ordinary justice and minimum freedom.

The sympathy of the farmers ought to go out to other groups as well. The sharp antagonisms between farmers and the merchants of the village, bankers, and other similar groups is of course sometimes explained either by dishonest practice or more often by social condescension. But that is no reason from the Christian point of view why the class feeling should run so high. The farmers should seek to know the truth about all these relationships. They should get acquainted with these groups. They should insist upon a square deal *all around*. They should make every effort to be fair themselves in attitude as well as to ask consideration for their own interests.

3. The farmers' organizations should emphasize local community consciousness, programs, and conscience. We will have need to dwell upon this point later. There is a growing conviction that rural progress is to be determined largely, and in the last analysis wholly, in accordance with the success with which the local farming community solves its problems. So, if we want to have a Christian program for our rural affairs, we must not

only make but carry out a Christian program for the local group or community.

4. Organizations should urge maximum efficiency of individual farmers and of farmers as a class. We have already referred to the fact that there is such a thing as the morality of efficiency. The farmers cannot expect complete sympathy for their efforts to secure justice in the distribution of products unless they themselves exercise every possible effort to produce as cheaply as possible.

We come here to one of the most difficult moral problems in the whole realm of our discussion. It is what might be called the competition of efficiency. In a huge country like the United States, there is inevitable competition between groups of farmers. New England has been perhaps the chief sufferer in this respect. A hundred years ago it began to feel the competition of the new lands west of the Hudson, and even to-day the New England farmer finds himself in competition with farmers of every corner of the United States. A certain measure of this sort of competition will remain. Whenever there is a surplus of a product, the resulting low price is due in reality

to competition among farmers. It is the part of wisdom and statesmanship to reduce this competition to as low terms as possible. Take, for example, the matter of potatoes. If Aroostook County, Maine, by reason of advantages of soil and climate, traditional experience and skill, or other factors, can produce potatoes more cheaply than can the farmers of northern Wisconsin, nobody can gainsay the right of the Maine farmers to do that very thing. And they ought not to be penalized for doing it. In other words, every effort should be made to encourage acquiescence in the normal economic law that things should be produced where they can be produced to best advantage, and farmers should be discouraged from attempting to produce in any region those things that can better be produced somewhere else.

5. Organizations should mobilize the best farmers' sentiment on behalf of the greatest national good. From a Christian point of view, in order to carry out the spirit of obligation or duty, organized agriculture will seek not merely its rights, but more than all will seek to lead the entire group to do its duty patriotically, that is, to work for the good of

the whole country. Organized agriculture will assert its rights, but it will even more proclaim and urge and endeavor to realize its duties.

6. Organizations should try to avoid the dangers of the agrarian movement. In general in the matter of organized agriculture there are the dangers that always come in organizations of great masses—class consciousness, insistence upon rights rather than duties when power is gained, temptation to use it for self-interest and even recklessly. The struggle for right too often breeds antagonisms and prejudices that last far beyond the occasion and prevent the group not only from doing its full duty to society as a whole, but also its own best self-realization.

Christianizing Agricultural Coöperation

The means by which the farmers hope to secure what they believe to be a square deal is mainly in the coöperative movement. The coöperative idea, in its essence, is thoroughly Christian. It represents a group, sinking individual advantage and personal prejudice, and working together for the common interest of the group. It is a very difficult thing to

achieve. It has taken the American farmer a long time to see its necessity. During the past ten years, driven by necessity it may be said, the coöperative movement in America has gained huge proportions. The problem is not yet solved; there are difficulties still in the way; there will be some serious wrecks probably before matters are fully worked out; but the gain has been enormous. Let me urge every country pastor to procure and read and inwardly digest a pamphlet issued by the Presbyterian Board of Home Missions consisting of articles originally appearing in *Home Lands*. The document is entitled "Pace Makers in Farmers' Coöperation." This coöperative movement is not only the most promising thing in sight for securing substantial justice to the farmers, but it is the strongest movement for carrying the Christian spirit into agricultural business. Of course the idea of coöperation may be prostituted. It is conceivable that great coöperative systems of producers could "hold up" the consumers. It is quite possible that a well-organized group of producers, learning to bargain collectively with consumers, might demand more than their share, might try to

charge "all that the traffic will bear," might even fight other groups of producers. But real coöperation contemplates none of these things, and true coöperation therefore may be said to be essentially Christian.

I am aware that many will say that effective agricultural coöperation is based on self-interest. This is a crucial question from the moral and Christian point of view. There is a good deal of preaching about coöperation that makes it out to be a method of reducing costs of distribution so that both producers and consumers will benefit, when in actual practice it often becomes nothing more or less than a new way to power. That there can be a moral and religious element in coöperation is evidenced in much European experience where before the war coöperation was almost in itself a religion. Many of the leaders were quite willing to argue that even though the farmers themselves might not in some cases gain much profit from coöperation, the habit of working together, the development of common interest, the give and take of adjusting rights and duties were in themselves worth while. Of course it would be sheer hypocrisy to urge coöperation on an

altruistic basis alone, assuming that self-interest is not advanced thereby. The real merit in coöperation from the moral point of view is that it balances self-interest and the social interest; and that is precisely what the Christian program demands.

Furthermore, we must subscribe either to the power idea or to the coöperative idea. If we subscribe to the power idea, then let might make right; let the farmer "get his" if he can; but remember that he must not complain if he does not secure his share. If we subscribe to coöperation, then we must stoop to conquer. We must coöperate to the end. We must insist that coöperation shall not be one-sided. Coöperation never is one-sided. Cooperation makes each do his share, makes each perform his duty, and consequently each secures his rights. It is not unmoral or unfair for the coöperator therefore to insist that his fellow coöperators really coöperate. Nevertheless, if we try to make coöperation merely another name for organized power, then we lose at the very start.

The farmer cannot complain, if he subscribes to the idea of power, should he sometimes be

beaten. In a contest for power, somebody has to lose. That is in contrast to coöperation, for in coöperation everybody gains because he gets his share.

It is obvious that we live in a world of struggle, that competition is inevitable. The struggle for a living is real, but after all we soon find that there is a higher law and a greater principle, namely, that of coöperation, the struggle for the life of others, mutual aid. We find that together we can do things even for ourselves that we cannot do alone. But true coöperation is love in action. It is the practical method of rendering service. In its application it embraces community loyalty, the balancing of rights and duties, the sense of working together with God. It is the incentive for community building. It is applied brotherhood.

THE CENTRAL PLACE OF THE CHURCH IN A RURAL CHRISTIAN PROGRAM

All through these lectures, we have been making an effort to distinguish between the process of Christianizing civilization, and the

assumption that Christianity is to be confined to the Church. We must now emphasize the place of the Church in formulating and developing the Christian program, in teaching men the Christian way of life, and in inspiring them to continued and steadfast consecration to the Christian ideal. Unless the Church carries Christianity as its freight it is not likely to be carried. While it is true that we seek to make all human institutions Christian and all human relationships Christian, there must be a great central dynamo of Christian power that will constantly send out its stimulating currents into all parts of human society, and that dynamo is the Church—or a substitute for it—and what substitute can there be?

William Adams Brown says that the task of the Church is "to mobilize all the resources of the Church for the Christianizing of the country as a whole." But the rural half of America cannot be Christianized by the churches of the urban half, only by the rural churches themselves.

The clear task of the country church then is to mobilize Christian sentiment, ideals, and programs; to lead in formulating and carrying

out a Christian program for the rural community.

Is the country church fully ready for this great commission? I confess that I sometimes doubt it. Let me make a list of some of the difficulties that arise out of what might perhaps be fairly termed the unpreparedness of the country church for the task we are here assigning to her. In making this assertion of relative unpreparedness of the country church, I am by no means unmindful of her strength and power and genuine service. I do, however, challenge her to a larger view of her task and a more united endeavor to fulfill it.

I should like to put this delicate but important matter in the form of a few queries:

1. Can we not, without sacrificing a proper loyalty to our denominations, get rid of the excess of the sectarian prejudices and rivalries that we must confess do arise, and do stand in the way of the Church achieving a united front against all the non-Christian forces and tendencies of our time?

2. Is it not possible to mobilize the rural churches in such fashion that we can fairly speak of the "American Country Church"?

At present, we have really no such thing as a country church. We have tens of thousands of country churches; we have country churches of certain denominations. But we have at present no group so far as I know that can be said to represent thoroughly and adequately and efficiently the country church movement, or any body or even any group that can speak for the country church as a whole, to say nothing of a group that can actually organize common opinion and allegiance.

3. May we not magnify the great objectives of the country church, and perhaps make less of the glory or credit of the institution itself? It seems to me I have discerned in our discussion of country church advancement, an inclination to stress organization, machinery, method, rather than the message. What we need first of all is a Christian program for rural society; then we may fairly ask ourselves, "What part will the church take in carrying out the program?" and "What is the Christian message for the countryside?" Let the church then make its message so broad, so comprehensive, so direct, so practical, if you please, and yet at the same time so idealistic,

so spiritual, that for all reasons it wins the allegiance of the multitude to its main end of making a Christian world.

4. Last year, when in China, I found that apparently the high-minded Chinese believes that the moral teachings which have been handed down to him for twenty-five hundred years, and which are wrought into the very fiber of the Chinese character, are not only sound but efficacious in the making of character. Now the Christian appeal to this Chinese must be a persuasion that there is a more efficacious means to character, that there is in fact a motive power tied up in the person of Jesus that will drive the human spirit faster and farther toward the goal of completeness than will the maxims of the Chinese ethical system, no matter how sound and good they are. And that is precisely what happens in the case of an intelligent Chinese who becomes a Christian. He does not care for our dogmas, he does not care for our sects. He cares mightily for results, and he is persuaded that in Jesus he finds the absorbing incentive in character building; in other words, he finds the way, the truth, and the life.

And I have wondered if we American Christians could not begin to compose our differences of religious views, or at least to determine that these differences shall not stand in the way of the heartiest coöperation in the work of making life truly Christian. In the best sense of the word "belief," Christian belief must precede a Christian life, but the type of belief that should precede life is belief in the ideal; for our purposes, belief in the Christian ideal, belief in the way of life that Jesus taught and lived. We have liked to stress the other aspect of belief; that is, belief in explanations, explanations of the idea and methods of God, explanations of the marvel of the person and work of Christ, explanations of the psychology of the relationships between men and their Maker. And we have constantly confused these types of belief; or rather we have been inclined to substitute belief in explanations for belief in the spiritual ideals, as the tests of discipleship. As one of our religious leaders has so well said, speaking of the miracle of Jesus walking on the water as a symbol of the value and effect of prayer: "I am persuaded that there are many people who believe confidently

that this event was physically true who fail utterly to gain the spiritual meaning of the incident; and I am equally persuaded that there are others who do not believe that the physical event occurred who grasp a spiritual meaning in the story which goes to the very root of the idea of prayer."

I never cease to be deeply moved by the challenge of "Ian MacLaren":

No church since the early centuries has had the courage to formulate an ethical creed, for even those bodies of Christians which have no written theological creeds, yet have implicit affirmations or denials of doctrine as their basis. Imagine a body of Christians who should take their stand on the Sermon of Jesus, and conceive their creed on His lines. Imagine how it would read, "I believe in the Fatherhood of God; I believe in the words of Jesus; I believe in the clean heart; I believe in the service of love; I believe in the unworldly life; I believe in the Beatitudes; I promise to trust God and follow Christ, to forgive my enemies and to seek after the righteousness of God." Could any form of words be more elevated, more persuasive, more alluring? Do they not thrill the heart and strengthen the conscience? Liberty of thought is allowed; liberty of sinning is alone denied. Who would refuse to

sign this creed? They would come from the east and the west, and the north and the south, to its call, and even they who would hesitate to bind themselves to a crusade so arduous would admire it, and long to be worthy. Does one say this is too ideal, too unpractical, too quixotic? That no church could stand and work on such a basis? For three too short years the Church of Christ had none else, and it was by holy living, and not by any metaphysical subtleties, the Primitive Church lived, and suffered, and conquered.

Let me hasten to say that such a creed does not by any means deny the value or the need of explanations. The human mind will not rest content without explanations. But let us put our main emphasis upon the cultivation of Jesus' spirit in the hearts of all men and in all their relations to life. Even permanent disagreements with respect to explanations of all the phenomena of the universe should not divide the disciples of Christ. They would still be all one in seeking the Christian way of life for all individual and collective effort.

Let us urge people to fullness of life, to participate in many interests, to a wide range of the spirit. If young people, for example,

can be made ambitious for the best things, if they can be shown that true religion is not a matter of the long face, but of the happy life, that it is not cutting off, but adding to the zest of living, we have made a tremendous gain. We have taught a truer Christianity.

What is the special contribution that the Church is peculiarly in a position to make at this point? It seems to me that it is in stimulating ideals, developing the spirit of service, emphasizing the duty of personal growth, urging breadth of mental training and wideness and sympathy of personal views. In other words, it is giving divine sanction for the finest, broadest human life. If we can put the right spirit into a man, we do not need to worry about his habits.

I cannot emphasize too much this task of the Church to stimulate men and women and to give them the right spirit and point of view. It so transcends all narrower and smaller conceptions of the work of the Church and what it should ask of its members.

5. Is there not a certain lack in the educational aspect of the work of the Church? I sometimes think the teaching of the Church is

done too exclusively by exhortation, not sufficiently by study and discussion. To discuss this query fully would involve us in many details of preparation of pastors, Sunday school policies, and the like. It is something for us to consider most seriously.

6. Do we make enough of the Church as a fraternity? Probably you have sometimes heard men who belong to some secret organization say that the reason they liked it was because of the sense of fellowship, of comradeship, of common personal ground on which to stand. Is this merely an excuse for not tying up with the Church, or is it a reflection upon the Church? Or are we to consider that it is impossible for a church made up of men, women, youth, children, of various grades of wealth, of education, of social contacts, to really be a fellowship, a fraternity? Doubtless there are thousands of small churches particularly, and very likely many of these are in the country, in which the fraternal or brotherhood spirit is prominent. And yet is it an idle suggestion that the Church shall emphasize more than it ever has before the fact that it ought to be, fundamentally and humanly speak-

ing, a Christian brotherhood in all that term implies?

7. It is a truism that the Church itself must be thoroughly Christian before it can make the world Christian. The Church must itself be tolerant before it can secure tolerance among classes or races. The Church must try to be as democratic, as fraternal, as coöperative, as forgiving, as honest, as kind, as broad, as it asks others to be.

A Few Practical Questions

1. How can the farm family life be made to contribute more fully to the definite religious instruction of children and youth?

2. Can the rural public school, under conditions that exist in America, foster the religious attitude and help children and youth to gain at least an insight into the problems of life in their moral aspect?

3. Can the Church school, or the Sunday school, be so organized in the country, that it can be effective in a real training of a large share of children and youth in what might be called a system of religious instruction; that

is, a system by which the average boy and the average girl, when they grow out of their 'teens, shall have some interest in the idea of a Christian program for the rural community and some grasp of the fundamental ideas that underlie such a conception?

4. How can the country church itself, presumably through its pastor, keep before these younger people the main ideas that underlie the task of Christianizing modern industry, modern agriculture, and modern life generally?

5. How can the Church assist in so stimulating the activities of so-called secular organizations that they will actually, even if not avowedly, participate in the Christian program?

6. How can church worship be made to contribute more fully and more definitely to the strengthening of the inner life?

7. How can prayer be made more real and vital and more an actual habit of more people?

8. Is it possible to get adults to give some time to the systematic consideration, through study and reading, of the problems that we are discussing in these lectures? Can we organize

discussion groups in the country on such a permanent basis that they will become real centers of education in this field?

9. How can we enlist preachers and how can we train them, who will make the country church work a life work, and who will build their service on the lines of seeking to help the farm people to make all parts of their life Christian?

Rural Churches and Agricultural Missions

The responsibility of the rural churches goes even further than the American rural community. Is there any reason why the rural churches should not take upon themselves the main responsibility for agricultural missions, that is, for Christianizing foreign rural communities? This, too, may seem like a counsel of perfection, wholly impossible and quixotic, especially in view of the evident need of contributions to much country church work from the city churches. However, most country communities could support one good church, and many of them could in addition make a moderate contribution to foreign missions. There are 6,000,000 farm families in America.

If they contributed to agricultural missions at the rate of 10 cents per family per year, more than half a million dollars would be realized. Urban interests could give as much more, and this million dollars a year would be sufficient for an ample program for American support of agricultural missions for a long time to come.

The Country Preacher as Leader

In the old days the minister was in many respects the most important man in the community. He ought to be so now. It is more difficult for the preacher to be this leader than it used to be. Education is more widely diffused. There is scarcely a community in America that does not possess at least one college graduate in its membership, entirely apart from the teacher or preacher; the preacher finds in some communities a group of men and women quite as well educated as he is. While he cannot dominate therefore by reason of amount or quantity of education, he can lead because of his special function; for his task is to show men the moral and spiritual bearing of each thought and word and deed of their

lives; in the home, in the community, in business, in class struggles, in international relationships. In other words, he is to preach practical righteousness, personal and collective. Now this imposes a tremendous responsibility, but it also gives a unique opportunity. In this field he has ever his own way. He should have at his command as assistants, many laymen, men and women, who are quite as conscious as he of the need of spiritual interpretations of life. He is the man who must have the vision of the prophet to interpret life in terms of character, in terms of the spirit.

To be such an interpreter, he must have some knowledge of the problems which the farmers have to deal with, so that in his preparation he should have training and experiences that give him understanding of the fundamental technical, scientific, economic, political, and social problems of agriculture. He does not need to be an expert in any of these. He simply must understand what is involved in them and then he can fairly ask the question, "Is this solution a righteous one? Is this solution really going to give the farmers their chance for manhood and womanhood? Is it

going to make for character and peace?" These are *his* questions.

And is this leadership not enough to challenge the ambition of any man to stand on the mountain top, to survey the great wide field of agricultural endeavor, to watch the battle as the armies deploy on the plain below, and then to say, "This is right, and this is wrong. This will succeed and this will fail"; not because he is an expert in military affairs, but because he knows the justice of the cause?

And then of course the minister should be a relatively permanent fixture in the rural community.

The Technical and the Moral

Objectors to the modern movement for preaching the social gospel continue to assert that the Church must not try to run the world's business, that the preacher must "preach the simple gospel" or must "preach religion," that the preacher should not "give out essays on economics," that "the preacher cannot be expected to solve the world's business problems."

That comments of this sort are constantly

made and indeed that they represent a very widespread opinion is partly a criticism of the Church itself. That is to say, the business of the Church is to map the Christian way of life for society. The Church should have made it clear that this task imposes on it the necessity of preaching about anything that affects the life of mankind on its moral and spiritual sides.

Nevertheless, there is a very real and difficult question involved, and the phase of it that I want to discuss for a moment has to do with the extent to which the country preacher must understand the problems of agriculture. It involves also the extent to which the agricultural specialists of any sort shall try to influence the Christian point of view.

So far as the preacher is concerned, no one would argue that the preacher should regard himself or be regarded by anybody else as a technical expert. In individual cases he may know a great deal about the details of farming, and he may be invaluable in some communities in helping to work out business problems. It is interesting to note that in the great coöperative movements in Europe, the pastors rendered an indispensable part as treasurers

of the little credit banks, or even as managers of coöperative societies. This was of course because there was nobody else to do it at the time. On the other hand, it would seem to be rather difficult for the preacher to make clear to his people just how business can be made Christian unless he knows something about the way in which that business has to be done. I should suppose that otherwise he would rather be beating the air. I think the average man in business and the average farmer want to do the fair thing and are, if you please, trying to be Christian, but the great difficulty is how really to apply religious teaching in the every-day work of the world as it is organized at present.

On the other hand if the laymen who are the leaders, either on the scientific or on the practical side, in the great work of agriculture, do not have clear-cut views as to a Christian program, it would hardly be expected that they would function fully in carrying out the program.

Is there any better counsel than that we shall hope that the agricultural specialist will be a Christian man understanding the Chris-

tian principles, that the country preacher will be a specialist in religion but will carry his specialty far beyond rhetoric or emotion or generalities, will study the problems of the people of the countryside as they have to meet those problems from day to day in their work and life, in order that he may help them interpret religion in its application to this work and life; in other words, that he may help them follow a Christian program of life and labor?

The Challenge to the Church

You may disagree with every item in the diagnosis of the country church situation that has been mentioned, and in the entire philosophy of its place, mission, and method implied in all that has been said. But I am sure that you will agree that the need of having and vitalizing a Christian program for our farming communities is a distinct and serious challenge to the American country church.

Chapter Five

CHRISTIANIZING THE RURAL COMMUNITY

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The Christian program to be effective must permeate all aspects of life, all institutions, all geographical areas, all movements. As a working basis for readjustment it must especially develop in the local social groups. Otherwise it will not be really effective. If we cannot have a Christian local rural community, we cannot have a Christian rural civilization. We may fool ourselves into measuring civilization by what we see in certain literature, or tendencies, or attitudes among those whom we are pleased to call the people at the top; but there is such a thing as mass values, and in the long run a civilization is measured by the quality of the entire people. What goes on in the local community is the vital test of a Christian program. Therefore, the task of Christianizing the local rural community is the very heart of our problem.

The Significance of the Community Idea

The community idea is well expressed by some sentences in the "declaration of purposes" of the National Grange, written fifty years ago. "We propose meeting together, talking together, buying together, selling together, and, in general, acting together for our mutual protection and advancement." The spirit of the quotation, extended to a neighborhood of farmers, is the community-spirit. *Togetherness,* rather than aloneness, is the community idea. The Grange, even at its best, is a bit exclusive; it picks its membership. A true community includes the interest of every one living in the community—old and young, native and foreigner, wise and foolish. The community idea assumes that every soul has in it some degree of divinity, that all are children of our heavenly Father, and that "all ye are brethren." It is based on the principle of the rights of all, even the humblest, combined with the duty to neighbors that is the obligation of all, even the strongest. But it assumes more than that. It holds that the unit of interest is the common interest of all, not the individual interests of many. There is a vast difference between en-

deavoring to compromise the personal desires of a hundred individuals, each seeking chiefly his personal welfare, and trying to bring the separate items of personal welfare into one program of common advancement—much the same difference that exists between bringing separate ovals of iron into a pile, and welding the separate links into a chain. One is accommodation; the other is brotherhood. A favorite figure of speech used by advocates of coöperation is the scientific fact that a group of one hundred small wires, woven into a cable, have far more strength in that form than if left hanging side by side, or even twisted into a loose bundle. But often the bottom lesson is unlearned—the real secret of power, that out of a hundred wires *we have made a cable,* not merely a bundle of contiguous individual wires.

The core of the community idea, then, as applied to rural life, is that we must make the *community*—as a unit, an entity, a thing—the point of departure in all our thinking about the rural problem, and the direct aim of all organized efforts for improvement or re-direction. The community idea is the one fundamental concept in the philosophy of rural civ-

ilization that ties theory to practice, that gives concreteness to organized effort, that binds personal ambition to large human welfare, that justifies institutional endeavor, that clarifies thinking, and that strengthens the arm for high endeavor. We are passing through a marvelous arousing of interest in rural matters. We are just now in the turbulent rapids of new ideas, schemes, and advices. The passage to the more placid, deeper-flowing waters of true advancement lies close to the shore of this concept—that the building of adequate local farm *communities* is the main task in erecting an adequate rural civilization. Here is the real goal of all rural effort, the inner kernel of a sane country life movement, the moving slogan of the campaign for rural progress that must be waged by the present generation.

We may say that the local farm community comprises the smallest group of farmers that can have their own social institutions. Investigations have of course shown that such communities do not absolutely exist, that there is, as a matter of fact in even small geographic areas, an economic group, a church group, a school group, and so on through the list. More

and more, however, the tendency is to remap as it were our farm population on the basis of true communities. The community therefore differs from the neighborhood, which is merely a group of families living near together. A true community must be in large measure self-sufficing; it must be a little world; it is in reality a family of families and has much of the integrity and unity of the family idea.

The Scope of the Community Idea

It is a bit unfortunate that the community idea has been propagated to quite an extent by agencies primarily urban in their point of view and experience and on the basis of the service of a particular institution, namely, the school. There can be no doubt that the school should be a community center and render distinct community service, but this by no means compasses the community idea nor indicates its possibilities. The community idea is as broad as the interests of the farming people, and it is quite as applicable to production, to distribution, to credit, to many forms of economic service as it is to the social and ideal elements of society. In order to make this significant fact somewhat

clear, let us make a very brief list of possibilities in the application of the community idea. This is not a fanciful list, for as a matter of fact here and there in this country and in other countries every item in the list is being practically demonstrated to-day.

Some of the Possibilities of the Community Idea

1. *Production.* It is doubtful if American farmers will attempt coöperative farming in the sense of pooling capital and labor in one piece of land. But it is perfectly practicable for them to pool their individual farm plans into a community plan. A Southern journalist has indicated to me his belief that cotton growing in the South would be very greatly advantaged if, in each local community, the cotton farmers would act as a unit concerning all the problems of production, such as seed selection, use of improved strains, development of methods of cultivation. Many farm communities have agreed upon a certain breed of stock or upon certain types of crops that they would grow—and are carrying out the agreement.

2. *Distribution.* The agricultural coöperative movement in America has at last discov-

ered the vital importance of building itself on a commodity basis, that is, the cotton farmers must market cotton, the wheat farmers, wheat, and the whole must be organized on a large enough scale to influence marketing conditions. But the wiser leaders of this movement are quite aware that organization at the top alone is futile, and that the permanent success of the coöperative movement depends upon a foundation solidly built of successful local marketing groups, that is, local community groups. This does not mean, however, that the entire community will unite to sell everything; thus far it seems necessary that the local individuals interested in a particular commodity shall work together. It will follow, however, when the different local community groups are well at work that they will find so many things in common that there will eventually be to all intents and purposes a local community marketing group.

3. *Credit.* We are proceeding in America to assist the farmers, both by long term and short term credit, by a great overhead organization fostered by the government. This is unquestionably the right procedure; but here

again the greatest efficiency cannot possibly result until the collective credit of the local community is made available for the individual members of that community. The American farmer is so individualistic that it may take a long time before this can be brought about in fullest measure, but it must come, because it is absolutely sound, economically and psychologically.

4. *Collective Service.* A good illustration is the coöperative laundry. Why should not the housewife be relieved of this form of drudgery? The possibilities here are widespread. If farmers do not want to grow their own fruits and vegetables, why not agree to buy fruits and vegetables from some one in the community who will make that his sole business? In some regions, community slaughterhouses can probably furnish a constant supply of fresh meat at lower costs than the butcher. There is almost no limit to the service that the members of the farm community can render themselves simply by intelligently planned collective effort.

The significance of the local community in stabilizing nation-wide coöperative efforts is

brought out in a quotation from a personal letter written by one of the best informed European workers in the coöperative movement. He is speaking of a region which he recently visited.

The conclusion that I have come to since being over there is that the reason why there is so much disloyalty in connection with the different coöperative undertakings is that the farmers and others associated with them have not been trained into the value of community organization. I have tried all I could to get the lesson imprinted in their minds—that the building of a successful economic agriculture must be on the foundation of mutual trust. Everywhere I went I found ignorance amongst members of the different societies, and a lack of faith in the principles of coöperation.

The Community and the Local Institutions

It is, of course, in the realm of institutional work that we find some of the most suggestive and stimulating aspects of the community program. Again let us list a few of these possibilities.

1. *The Family.* At first thought it may seem rather theoretical to suggest that the family life has any special relationship to the com-

munity as a whole, but that relationship is really most vital. It is important that the family shall not live unto itself alone, but that it shall be deeply concerned with all that goes on in the community. We have not yet begun to discover all the ways in which the farm family may function in building the community or ways in which the farm family may ask the community to assist it in its work as a primary social unit.

2. *The School.* Far too much we still think of the school as a place for young children to get the rudiments of what we call an education in order that they may personally and individually benefit and profit by it. That is an inadequate conception of the school. It is really an institution for the purpose of serving the community as a center of well-directed thinking. It will of course give the young the tools of the mind. But it will, if true to its purpose, inspire them to use those tools for the benefit of the community and of society at large. But eventually the school will go even farther than that, and will be a center of adult education through which people all through life will be stimulated to maintain a certain measure of

study and thinking concerning the entire range of their interests, not only local and community interests, but world interests. The school then will be a true community institution, not merely because it is owned and managed by the community, but because it has the community outlook and is constantly endeavoring to serve the community as a center of adult interest.

3. *Farmers' Associations.* Farmers' organizations do have to quite an extent the community purpose in point of view, although in some cases they restrict their membership rather unfortunately. And in other cases they appeal for coöperation on the basis chiefly of the individual benefit that will accrue through coöperation. This of course is legitimate, but it is not complete. The farmers' organization will function fully only when it looks at its work from the standpoint of the effort to benefit the entire community. The farmers' organization therefore will tend to become the economic center of the community.

4. *The Church.* We might as well frankly confess our sins and say that the Church has been too exclusively concerned with its future as an institution. Of course, I suppose, all

Church members, when they stop to think about it, really believe that the mission of the Church is to Christianize the world. But in actual practice this great ideal degenerates too frequently into a denominational or sectarian ambition rather than a passion for service to all. Here again the community idea comes really to rescue the Church, for the local church should seek not to build itself merely for the sake of itself, but in order that it may be of use to all—in other words, that it may secure a Christian program for the community. We must remember that the only way to be serviceable is to be serviceable. The building up of the Church is incidental; the main thing is the service of the Church to the entire community.

A Community Program

The community idea involves the making of a program for the community. There must be a study of the resources of the community, physical and human resources, a study of the needs of the community; and then on the basis of these considerations a plan of improvements, for that is all a program amounts to. There

ought to be no such thing as a perfectly contented community. A community should be just as ambitious as an individual, always anxious to improve, grow, and progress, to enlarge its idea of what life really means. A community program will grow out of the ideas and thinking and coöperation of the people themselves, but it may be vastly aided and stimulated by outside agencies and by contact with other communities.

The Community Organization

The ideal organization of the local rural community is one that actually brings together all the people of the community into occasional meetings for the purpose of discussing the needs of the community, eventually hearing reports on the various items of community progress, and determining further policies for the community.

This in turn involves some form of committee or committees which will really make studies of community needs and serve as leaders in getting results.

There is no one formula with respect to details. The community club idea has been very

popular in many parts of our country, especially where there are not very many local organizations. In those communities that already have a good many associated efforts, the community council, made up of representatives of these different agencies, seems to work pretty well.

The main thing is to make sure that the people of the community, through whatever committees or groups or leaders seem to be best for that community, are considering community needs, community possibilities, and community methods.

A state-wide "community life campaign," carried out by the Virginia State Council of Rural Agencies, illustrates splendidly a well-planned effort to organize local communities, secure the coöperation of all agencies, and promote community welfare:

> The aims and purposes of this campaign are (1) to arouse the people to a sense of community responsibility and to organize for self-help; (2) to promote an intelligent public sentiment by making known the best that is being done for rural improvement in Virginia and the Nation, by putting struggling communities in touch with sources of help and information;

and (3) to bring about a closer and more effective coöperation of all existing agencies so that the point of view of the community will always be the point of view of each.

The home, the church, the school, the farm, health, transportation, and recreation will be carefully discussed and studied, and efforts will be put forth in every county to develop progressive programs for the development of community life. To this end the support and interest of all teachers, ministers, school authorities, health workers, the various farmers' and citizens' organizations, the Red Cross, the editors of all newspapers, home and county demonstration and agricultural agents, and all organizations engaged in State-wide rural work, are being enlisted.

In West Virginia, remarkable results have accrued from the use of "community score-cards." Competition in community-building has resulted. Best of all, the community-idea has become vital in the thinking of the farmers.

Leadership

It goes without saying that a program of this sort requires good leadership and, if I may say so, it requires Christian leadership. What I mean is that the local leaders must have the

spirit of service; they must seek the good of the community; they must be willing to coöperate with one another; they must not be too jealous of prerogative or too anxious for personal credit. In almost any farming community, if a group of six or eight local leaders can work together year after year in peace and harmony for the benefit of the entire community, we may be almost certain that the balance of the community will fall in line.

The Place of the Church

If this local community program is to be Christian, it should have the hearty support of the local church or churches because it is the local church that ought to be able to furnish the ideas and the incentive and the example in the matter of trying to make that community as nearly an ideal community as it is possible under human limitations.

And think for a moment what the Church has at stake. If we are really seeking to usher in the Kingdom of God, we shall wish to render every possible aid to the development of the local community, because there is no other way to bring in the Kingdom of God. If the

natural units of our rural society are not Christianized, the society as a whole cannot possibly be Christian.

Community Loyalty

I quote a pregnant sentence from the book "Recent Developments in European Thought":

> And there is now a greater and stronger demand among us for a further advance, above all for making every citizen not merely or even primarily a voting unity, but a consciously active, consciously coöperative, member of the community.

We have come to one of the most profound statements that can be imagined with reference to the future of rural civilization in America. In China, we are told, the great difficulty is that there is no spirit of nationality, no patriotism, that the individual is not conscious of the need of loyalty to the country as a whole. His loyalties are all local, primarily to the family and then to the clan, the guild, and the village. We of the Western world have emphasized loyalty to the nation, and by the same token we have under-emphasized the need of participation in a community development. We want

every American farmer to be "consciously active, consciously coöperative" in all good words and works that affect the welfare of his neighbors, of his local community. Its institutions are his institutions; its success his success; its opportunities his opportunities. Says Joseph Lee, under the title "The Community: Maker of Men": "The community will call on every citizen to serve its purposes because it knows that they are also his. It will call as with a trumpet blast of peace, but it is to the still small voice within—to the great purpose as it is whispered to the man himself—that it will speak. . . ."

But some say in any such scheme of organized or collective effort you are submerging the individual; the glory of America is that she has given the individual his chance. But times have changed, and I say to you that the only way now for the individual to get his chance is by working with and for his fellows. The old liberty of the individual must give way to that new freedom for the individual that can come only by coöperative effort. And the great point about it all is that the practical working unit of coöperating effort is not the nation,

not the farmers as a class, not the state, not the county, but the local community—a little family of families.

The duty of the individual to this community, then, is that when making his own plans for his own business he should keep in mind the community plan and the community interest, and see if he cannot in doing his business, in making his living, help the common job of making a living for the community. He may have to subordinate himself to some extent, he may have to surrender some of his ideas, possibly some of his apparent freedom. But is not this always the duty of a good citizen in a democratic commonwealth and in a Christian civilization? Surely we cannot set up as our ideal each man for himself alone; rather must we say, "Each for all, and all for each."

Nevertheless, one has a right to ask, what may the individual expect from the community? Well, he has a right to have from the community all that the community can do to give him and his family a fair chance—good schools, good churches, good roads, good health, good recreation, good morals, good politics, friendship, kindness, fair dealing, good

books. In other words the community has an obligation to every individual in that community to furnish him the materials for as complete a life, for as large a growth, for as great happiness, as it is possible to provide.

The community must also give this individual a chance to serve. Usually we speak of the duty of service; I want to emphasize the privilege of service. Only rarely does a man grow in mental and moral stature by sitting in his house and letting the world drift by. He must be out among men, working with them, helping his fellows to the best there is, developing his sympathies, enlarging his viewpoint, giving practical help. The full measure of manhood comes only when men serve their fellows. Now the community must give this opportunity. Every one has a talent that can be used for the good of his fellows. The community must give him the chance to use it and not compel him to hide it in a napkin or bury it in the ground.

I want to call attention to one aspect of community building often overlooked. We are apt to think of community problems as of interest only to the community, of community

life as small and narrow just because it is lived out here in a little neighborhood of farm folk away from the great world. As a matter of fact the ideal rural community is a little world. And from this center men may go, and should go, in their thinking and their sympathies, out to other communities, out to the farm people of the whole state, and of the whole country, yes, out to the cities and to the common interests of our great America, and even more, out to the whole world. Brotherhood is not cribbed, cabined, and confined to a church group, or a fraternal group, or a neighborhood group, or a class group, or a national group. Brotherhood is but a mockery unless it takes in every nationality the wide world round.

Can I say more to emphasize the conviction that all of this Christian program for farm interests must be applied in the local units, the little farm communities, or else it is a nearly useless scrap of paper? The real battle for a Christian rural civilization will be settled as each of the tens of thousands of rural communities become more or less Christian in their daily work and life. Here, at home, among his neighbors, must each man have his chance,

seek the common welfare, help create a high group morality, work for the good of humankind, develop his own inner life, fulfill his obligations, receive and enjoy his rights, become truly Christian.

It may be remarked in passing that the community-building idea is quite as applicable to other nations as to our own. In most countries, in fact, true rural communities already exist in the form of farm villages. Missionary statesmen, for example, now recognize that if huge populations such as those of India and China are to be "Christianized," the process must be that of making these little local social units Christian.

In this series of lectures, quotations have been freely used. This has been done that you may see that mine is not a voice crying in the wilderness, but simply one of many voices insisting that we must make the world Christian. So let the closing words be some challenging statements concerning the duties and opportunities of the Church, particularly of the country church.

Professor Harlan Feeman, in "The Kingdom and the Farm," thus defines the program

of the rural church: "However, the main work will be to provide leadership through leaders from the Church-membership who have the social consciousness of the Kingdom and who will project the Christian motive into the allied forces of the Church and direct them toward the realization of the Christian ideal."

Dr. Brunner issues a ringing challenge to the country church in "The Country Church in the New World Order":

The aim of the country church movement is not to substitute anything for the Gospel. It is to assist in expressing the best religion of the ages in terms of the best spirit of the age. It believes that it is the duty of the rural pastor ever to exalt Jesus as the Saviour and as the Impulse, the Inspirer of all true service, of all kingdom tasks and duties. Thus only can spiritual leadership be maintained. Thus only can power adequate to the kingdom task in rural America be generated and conserved. Apart from Jesus we can do nothing. The field of service for the country pastor and his church is to relate and apply the Gospel to life, so to define the Kingdom of Heaven and so to sympathize with and serve its manifold needs that rural ideals will be maintained and enlarged, that the men and women of farm and village will be saved and will go forth to ex-

press their religion in service for their Church and their community, for their part of the Kingdom. It is a large field and a challenging task. None is more exacting, none more important. Success depends, not upon many activities, but few; not on various goals, but one —and that goal the Kingdom of Heaven.

And will you accept the challenge of Eduard Lindeman, as he outlines a program for the local church, in his recent book "The Community"? He says:

The Church as an institution, in order to play a vital rôle in the Community Movement, should consider the following program:

(a) It should emphasize the universal rather than the fractional elements of the Christian religion.

(b) It should emphasize the scientific rather than the mystical elements of the Christian religion.

(c) It should emphasize the ethical rather than the creedal factors of the Christian religion.

(d) It should emphasize the social rather than the individual function of the Christian religion.

(e) It should emphasize its special function, namely, the spiritual interpretation of the values of life.

(f) It should recognize the law of the division of labor in social affairs.

(g) In delegating tasks to other agencies, organizations and institutions it should not relinquish its interest and its supervisory control.

(h) It should train leaders for all worthy causes leading toward social progress.

(i) It should apply its principles freely to all political, social, economic, recreational, and educational problems of the community.

(j) It should furnish the inspiration of the spiritual dynamic for running the social machinery of the community.

And finally, let me leave with you these superb sentences from William Adams Brown:

Democracy has a right to expect of the Church a unifying spiritual influence, springing from a common faith, and issuing in common action. We are standing between two worlds—the world of selfish competition whose reliance is only on force, and a world of mutual helpfulness and coöperation which appeals to reason and good will. The issue is all the more serious because it is a moral issue. . . . Two theories of world organization are contending for the mastery: the soldier's theory and the teacher's theory. . . . Between them there can be no compromise; in the end one or the other must conquer.

Priceless as is our inheritance, it will not

become truly ours until we make it ours by use. To this use the living Church must point the way. We must take the old words which long association has clothed with a remote and artificial sanctity and make them a part of the vital thought of to-day; we must devise the new forms of social organization through which the ideals they express may be translated from hope into accomplishment; we must add to the lesser loyalties which divide the citizens of the different nations, the inclusive citizenship of the Kingdom of God.

THE END